

PAGLIACCI
LEONCAVALLO

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MASCAGNI: CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/LEONCAVALLO: PAGLIACCI

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CHANDOS
OPERA IN
ENGLISH

MASCAGNI

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA



AKG

Ruggero Leoncavallo, 1894

Ruggero Leoncavallo (1857–1919)

Pagliacci (The Touring Company)

Opera in a prologue and two acts

Libretto by Leoncavallo

English translation by Edmund Tracey with amendments by David Parry

Tonio (in the play, *Taddeo*), a clown Alan Opie *baritone*
Canio (in the play, *Pagliaccio*), leader of the players Dennis O'Neill *tenor*
Beppe (in the play, *Harlequin*) Peter Bronder *tenor*
Nedda (in the play, *Columbina*), Canio's wife Rosa Mannion *soprano*
Silvio, a villager William Dazeley *baritone*
Two locals Paul Parfitt *bass-baritone* • Peter Hall *tenor*

Geoffrey Mitchell Choir

The Peter Kay Children's Choir

London Philharmonic Orchestra

Brad Cohen assistant conductor

David Parry

	Prologue	Time	Page
1	'Hello... Hello...' <i>Tonio</i>	8:12	48
	Act I		
	Chorus		
2	'Hey! They're back! They're back!' <i>Chorus, Canio, Beppe</i>	2:58	49
	Aria		
3	'Your most humble servant' <i>Canio, Chorus, Tonio, Beppe</i>	2:48	50
	Cantabile		
4	'If he tried it, I promise you' <i>Canio, Nedda, Chorus</i>	3:09	51
	Chorus		
5	'Do you hear them playing?' <i>Chorus, Canio</i>	4:10	51
	Introduction		
6	'The ugly look he gave me!' <i>Nedda</i>	2:44	52
	Aria		
7	'Swallow, fly away' <i>Nedda</i>	2:23	52
	Duet		
8	'It's you! I thought that you had gone with Canio' <i>Nedda, Tonio</i>	5:02	53

	Duet	Time	Page
9	'Nedda!' <i>Silvio, Nedda</i>	1:28	55
10	'Why do you go on with this tormented life?' <i>Silvio, Nedda</i>	2:44	55
11	'I must be strong' <i>Nedda, Silvio, Tonio</i>	3:19	56
12	'How can you tell me you ever loved me' <i>Silvio, Nedda</i>	4:18	56
	Scene and Finale		
13	'Be very careful, and then we can surprise them' <i>Tonio, Silvio, Nedda, Canio, Beppe</i>	5:00	57
	Introduction		
14	'Go on stage' <i>Canio</i>	0:46	59
	Aria		
15	'Put on your costume' <i>Canio</i>	2:59	60
16	Intermezzo	3:45	60
	Act II		
	Chorus		
17	'Ohe! Ohe! Quickly! Hurry!' <i>Chorus, Tonio, Beppe, Silvio, Nedda</i>	4:07	60

	The Play	Time	Page
18	'Pagliaccio, that's my husband' <i>Nedda (Columbina), Beppe (Harlequin)</i>	1:40	62
	Serenade		
19	'Oh, Columbina' <i>Beppe (Harlequin), Columbina</i>	2:45	63
20	'She's waiting. She is a goddess!' <i>Tonio (Taddeo), Columbina, Harlequin</i>	3:50	63
21	'Arlecchin!' 'Columbina' <i>Columbina, Harlequin, Taddeo</i>	1:57	64
22	'Pour the potion in his glass at midnight!' <i>Harlequin, Columbial/Nedda, Canio (Pagliaccio), Tonio</i>	3:04	65
	Aria		
23	'No, we're not in a play!' <i>Canio, Chorus, Silvio, Nedda, Beppe, Tonio</i>	6:31	66
	TT 79:45		

Ruggero Leoncavallo: Pagliacci

Another composer's success and a court case were, in a very real sense, the progenitors of Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*. Had it not been for Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana*, produced in 1890, it is doubtful whether the publisher Sonzogno would have accepted Leoncavallo's work or whether the composer would have even taken it to him.

The story of the court case goes back to the composer's boyhood. His father was a judge, and Leoncavallo vividly recalled the trial of an actor who, seized with jealousy, murdered his wife at the end of a performance. The prisoner, apparently a figure of tragic power, faced up to the accusation, grief-stricken yet unbending. Leoncavallo remembered years later the man's rough voice echoing through the court. This awesome figure, a model for Canio, arose in his mind as a subject for a short, taut drama after *Cavalleria rusticana* had been produced. He completed his own libretto and its setting in five months. Sued later for plagiarism, he had only to tell the true story for the irate author to drop his case.

Leoncavallo's *verismo* technique is not unexpected from a man with Leoncavallo's

biographical and musical background. His father, as we have seen, was a judge, his mother a painter, famous at the time in Naples, where the composer was born on 8 March 1857. He studied with various piano teachers before entering the Naples Conservatory. While a student he heard *Tannhäuser* at Bologna, an experience that made a deep impression on him. A meeting with Wagner in the town shortly after made an even deeper impression. Apparently Wagner said to him: 'Voyez, je lutte encore' (See, I'm still struggling). The memory of those words cheered Leoncavallo during his own years of struggle to gain recognition. Shortly after completing his studies, when he was eighteen, he wrote his first opera *Chatterton*, but efforts to get it produced proved abortive.

While earning his living by playing the piano he began composing a Wagner-inspired trilogy entitled *Crepusculum*, dealing with the Renaissance in Italy. At one point, while touring in the Middle East (1882), he was offered the post in Cairo as chief of military bands, which he might have accepted had the activities of the British Army not forced him to flee to Ismailia disguised as an Arab!

Next he completed *I Medici*, part of his trilogy, but though Ricordi had signed a contract for the work, he did not see fit to publish it, being more impressed with Leoncavallo as a poet of the theatre than as a composer. After three years attempting to get *I Medici* performed, he wrote *Pagliacci*, which he gave to Ricordi's great rival Sonzogno. It proved an almost immediate success when produced at the Teatro dal Verme on 21 May 1892, conducted by Toscanini. So successful was it that the following year *I Medici* was at last staged – in the same theatre. As it proved a failure, Leoncavallo did not pursue the remaining parts of the trilogy, *Savonarola* and *Cesare Borgia*, but *Chatterton* was eventually produced (1896) and then his version of *La bohème* (1897), which suffered virtual eclipse in view of Puccini's more inspired setting of Murger's novel. *Zazà* came next (1900) and these are the only works of the composer's still seen in Italy today other than *Pagliacci*.

He continued to write until his death in 1919. His later works include such curiosities as *Der Roland von Berlin* (1904), composed on an express commission from Kaiser Wilhelm II, and *Are You There?*, an operetta written for London in 1913. Leoncavallo had already been in London in 1911 to conduct *Pagliacci* and *Zazà* at the Hippodrome and returned the

following year to conduct a new piece, *Zingari* (The Gypsies), written specially for that theatre. He sought in vain to repeat the overwhelming success of *Pagliacci*, and his reputation will continue to depend on the survival of his most noted work.

What is its fascination and worth? Let's first look at some contemporary opinions. Hermann Klein, a leading critic of the time, wrote in his memoirs of its first London performance in May 1893 (when the composer was present), 'The fame of Leoncavallo's sensational opera had preceded it, and the public expected something remarkable. They were not disappointed. I have rarely seen an audience so breathless with excitement over the development of an opera plot'. He then goes on to describe and praise the cast, Fernando de Lucia as Canio, Melba as Nedda and Mario Ancona as Tonio, adding that 'Leoncavallo, modest and unassuming, waited quietly in the background till the end, and then had to be forced on to the stage by the artists to acknowledge the ovation that awaited him... I found him to be a man of great culture and strong intellect. He is a poet as well as a musician, and in both arts he reveals the grasp of a profound thinker'.

Praising the work's *verismo* (reality), *The Daily Telegraph* opined, 'We appear to have

done for the present with legendary heroes and cloudy myths' – a sally, of course, at Wagner – 'Their personages are too far removed; they are not flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones. Nowadays the demand is for Human Documents, for characters in tale and drama that are our kin, not our exaggerated selves'. More recently, more succinctly the critic Spike Hughes wrote that Leoncavallo was fulfilling 'A Long Felt Want'. Here were no longer the conventional romantic hero, nor yet again figures from Norse saga, but real people – earthy, passionate, full of life.

Of course, the tale of the clown whose heart is breaking but who must go on playing out his comic part is not new; nor is the device of a play within a play. Leoncavallo's skill was to clothe these devices in music that was touching, immediately accessible and attractive, tuneful without being tawdry. He was an accomplished librettist and by adhering to the Aristotelian unities of time and space, his scenario is at once credible and swift-moving. His characterisation may not run very deep, but it is convincing enough to make us believe that these are real people.

For his score, Leoncavallo took just as much as he needed from Wagnerian methods. There is a rudimentary use of *Leitmotiv*, and neither the harmony nor orchestration could have

been as it is had Wagner never existed. However, the work as a whole has a recognisably Italian flavour: the choral passages, for instance, place the action unmistakably in Southern Italy and, whether the composer is being unpretentiously and sensuously tuneful as in Beppe's (Harlequin's) Serenade or Nedda's Ballatella, or strongly impassioned, as in the 'Ridi, Pagliaccio' (Make it amusing) theme of 'Vesti la giubba' (Put on your costume), the music evinces a transalpine lyricism. These and other set pieces, such as the erotic duet for Nedda and Silvio, are fully integrated into a unified structure in the manner of Verdi's late masterpieces.

Leoncavallo brings off a brilliant *coup de théâtre* with the Prologue in which Tonio pokes his head through the curtain, then comes out to tell the members of the audience directly that even the actors are men and women like themselves, passionate, rejoicing, suffering. The play within a play, somewhat reminiscent of that in *Hamlet* in its relevance to the main action, is another effective contrivance calling forth delightful *commedia dell'arte* music from the composer.

In performance, *Pagliacci* stands or falls by the writing for, and interpretation of the role of Canio. In three moving passages, Leoncavallo reveals an honest man felled by

jealousy and remorse, a fitting successor to Verdi's *Otello*, and requiring a heroic tenor of like mettle. In 'Un tal gioco, credetimi' (If he tried it, I promise you) the tone of menace, a warning unheeded by Nedda, shows us a powerful man, one not to be trifled with. In 'Vesti la giubba' (Put on your costume), after Nedda's infidelity has been confirmed, a great soul is racked with torment as the clown unburdens his feelings, heartache mingled with nobility of expression. Finally, in 'No, Pagliaccio non son' (No, we're not in a play) Canio reproaches his unfaithful wife, pouring out all his grief in the most eloquent passage Leoncavallo ever penned, beginning 'Sperai, tanto il delirio accecato m'aveva' (I hoped, so blind was I, so deluded with passion) and rising at the climax to a top B. If it pierces the heart, as it should, it raises the last pages of the opera from melodrama to true tragedy.

Tonio is also an interesting creation. Again there is a dichotomy, this time between the fool, Taddeo, who makes love to Nedda as Columbina in the play, and the deformed, pathetic figure who has his love cruelly beaten down by her in real life. Nedda is an unthinking woman swayed by her basic desires, little else. Beppe is the lighthearted, peace-making member of the troupe. Silvio is something of an operatic cipher though

Leoncavallo grants the handsome lover some of his most grateful music to sing. All play their part in a piece whose dramatic conviction never fails to move an audience.

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Synopsis

The action takes place in a Calabrian village on the eve of the Feast of the Assumption. The opera opens with a prologue when Tonio steps in front of the curtain and addresses the audience, reminding them that the actors are real people and that the story should not be dismissed as fiction.

Act I

The villagers are celebrating the Feast of the Assumption, and when they see that the players have arrived in the village rush to greet them. Canio, the leader of the troupe, comes forward and tells the assembled villagers that the performance will take place that evening. Tonio tries to help Canio's wife Nedda out of the cart she has been riding in, but Canio pushes him out of the way and boxes his ears. A few of the villagers comment that maybe Tonio and Nedda should not be left alone together. Canio is angry and says that while in a play such a thing may be classed as comedy, in real life the outcome would be very

different. When he has calmed down he and Beppe go into the village, and the villagers go to vespers.

Left alone, Nedda becomes worried about Canio's outburst, but she soon relaxes in the evening sunshine. Tonio appears and after she has finished her song he approaches her and declares his love. But Nedda laughs at him, and he gets more and more angry. She is eventually forced to protect herself by striking him in the face with a whip. He leaves, but swears revenge.

Just after he has gone, Nedda's lover Silvio appears. He urges her to run away with him after that night's performance. At first she does not agree, but when Silvio questions her love she relents. Tonio overhears part of their conversation and he goes to fetch Canio, who arrives just in time to hear her calling out to Silvio who has disappeared over the wall. Nedda refuses to tell Canio her lover's name. Canio, racked with jealousy, dresses for his part in the comedy. He is sure that her lover will be at the play that evening.

Act II

The audience (including Silvio) is assembled and Nedda collects their money. The play begins. *Columbina* (Nedda) is waiting for her lover *Harlequin* (Beppe), as her husband

Pagliaccio (Canio) has gone away for the night. Outside *Harlequin* serenades her. *Taddeo* (Tonio) enters and declares his secret love for her, but she scorns him and he leaves when *Harlequin* enters. *Harlequin* and *Columbina* sit down to eat but *Pagliaccio* returns unexpectedly and *Harlequin* escapes through the window. Her farewell words to *Harlequin* remind Canio of Nedda's farewell to her secret lover earlier that evening. Canio finds it hard to keep in character and demands of *Columbina*/Nedda her lover's name. Nedda desperately tries to keep in character, but Canio grows more and more angry. The spectators become nervous, and Nedda tries to escape. But Canio manages to grab her and he stabs her. Silvio rushes to try to save her, but he too is stabbed. As Canio stands shocked, he announces to the audience that the play is over.

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Alan Opie was born in Cornwall and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the London Opera Centre. He was principal baritone with English National Opera for many seasons, and also sang with all the other major British Opera companies including the Royal Opera Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Opera

North. Foreign operatic engagements have taken him to the opera houses of Bayreuth, Paris, Amsterdam, Chicago, Milan, Munich, Berlin, Vienna and Brussels as well as The Metropolitan Opera, New York.

Alan Opie has won *Grammy Awards* for *Peter Grimes* (on Chandos) and *Die Meistersinger* (with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Solti). His other recordings include *The Barber of Seville* and *La bohème* (for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation), *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Gloriana*, and *Troilus and Cressida* (the production of which was sponsored by the Peter Moores Foundation, and recorded by Chandos).

Born in Wales of Irish and Welsh parents, **Dennis O'Neill** is one of the world's leading tenors and a specialist in the works of Verdi. He has enjoyed a long association with the Royal Opera Covent Garden, where his recent roles have included Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos and Radames (*Aida*).

North American engagements have included The Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* and *Rigoletto*), Chicago Lyric Opera, San Francisco, San Diego, Vancouver Opera and concerts with the Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal and Ottawa Symphony

Orchestras, and for the Cincinnati Festival. He is a frequent guest at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich. Elsewhere in Europe he has appeared at the opera houses of Vienna, Bonn, Cologne, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Brussels and Barcelona.

His many recordings include solo albums, Verdi's Requiem with Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* with Slatkin, videos of *Der Rosenkavalier* with Solti, *Die Fledermaus* with Kiri te Kanawa conducted by Domingo, *Macbeth* with Sinopoli and *Mefistofele* for San Francisco Opera. For Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation he has recorded *Tosca*, *La bohème* and a solo album.

Peter Bronder was born in Hertfordshire of German/Austrian parentage and studied at the Royal Academy of Music and the National Opera Studio. After a season with Glyndebourne Festival Opera he was principal tenor for Welsh National Opera from 1986 to 1990, where his repertoire included main roles in *La bohème*, *La traviata*, *I puritani*, *La sonnambula*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il barbiere de Siviglia*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Eugene Onegin*. He has also appeared with English National Opera (Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*, Vanya in *Kát'a Kabanová*), Opera North (Captain in *Wozzeck*), Scottish

Opera (Leicester in *Maria Stuarda*) and the Royal Opera Covent Garden (Cassio in *Otello*, Apparition of Youth in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*).

Rosa Mannion was born in Liverpool and studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. She currently studies with Gerald Martin Moore. She made her Royal Opera Covent Garden debut as Pamina in 1993, and has sung with all the major British companies in roles such as Constanze (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Cordelia (Aribert Reimann's *Lear*), Sophie (*Werther*), Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Atalanta (*Xerxes*), Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Magnolia (*Showboat*), Violetta (*La traviata*), the four soprano roles in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and the title role in *Manon*.

Her recordings include *Così fan tutte* with John Eliot Gardiner, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Orlando* with William Christie, Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music* and Third Symphony and Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*.

William Dazeley is a graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge, and he studied singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Prizes include the Decca-Kathleen Ferrier Prize, the Richard Tauber Prize and the Walther Gruner International Lieder Prize. His extensive

operatic repertoire includes the title roles in *Don Giovanni*, *Owen Wingrave*, *Billy Budd* and *Eugene Onegin*, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Pelléas, Mowgli (Michael Berkeley's *Baa Baa Black Sheep*), Danilo (*The Merry Widow*) and the Count and Rudolph (*Der ferne Klang*). He has appeared with the Royal Opera Covent Garden, Opera North, Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Teatro regio Turin, Opéra de Lyon and New Israeli Opera. Recordings include *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, Britten's *The Rescue of Penelope*, Busoni's *Doktor Faust*, and *La bohème* (for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation).

Geoffrey Mitchell's singing career encompassed a remarkably wide repertoire from early to contemporary music. This resulted in conducting invitations from the BBC and subsequently to a wider involvement with his own singers and this led to the establishment of the **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Early recordings resulted in the Choir's long-term involvement with Opera Rara for whom it has recorded fifteen operas. The Choir is currently enjoying a growing reputation with further work from the BBC and international recording companies.

The Peter Kay Children's Choir provides young singers with opportunities in opera,

concerts, commercials (TV and Radio), charity events, festivals and theatre productions in the UK, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Spain and the USA. Its membership is by invitation and audition, drawing participants from among those already experienced in singing performance at English National Opera, where Peter Kay is Children's Adviser, the Finchley Children's Music Group, New London Children's Choir, The Jennifer Lilleystone Singers and schools all over London and the south of England.

The **London Philharmonic Orchestra** was formed in 1932 by Sir Thomas Beecham. Over the years it has attracted an unmatched series of principal conductors, including Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti and Klaus Tennstedt. Its current regular conductors include Music Director Franz Welser-Möst and President Bernard Haitink.

Since 1964 it has been resident symphony orchestra at Glyndebourne Festival Opera and, in 1992, became resident symphony orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall. It also tours extensively, being the first British orchestra to visit the USSR and China, and its recordings have won many major awards.

David Parry studied with Sergiu Celibidache and began his career as Sir John Pritchard's assistant. He made his debut with English Music Theatre and went on to become a staff conductor at Städtische Bühnen Dortmund and at Opera North. He was Music Director of Opera 80 from 1983 to 1987 and since 1992 has been the founding Music Director of the contemporary opera festival Almeida Opera.

He pursues a busy career both in opera and in concert. His repertoire extends from Mozart and early nineteenth-century Italian opera to Janáček, Britten and contemporary music. In England he has appeared regularly at English National Opera and in concert with the Philharmonia Orchestra. In 1996 he made his debut at the Glyndebourne Festival with *Così fan tutte*.

He is a frequent visitor to Spain where he has appeared with most of the opera companies and symphony orchestras. He gave the Spanish premiere of *Peter Grimes* in Madrid and in 1996 conducted the first Spanish production of *The Rake's Progress*, inaugurated two new concert halls with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and a new opera house with *Carmen*. He has also appeared in Italy, where he conducted *Ricciardo e Zoraide* in the Rossini Opera Festival at Pesaro, in France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, and in

Sweden where he conducted an acclaimed production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Outside Europe David Parry has appeared at the Hong Kong International Festival, with the UNAM Symphony Orchestra at Mexico City, with a tour of *Carmen* in Japan and, in 1996, conducting a new production of *Káťa Kabanová* for the New Zealand Festival.

He has recorded extensively for the Opera Rara label, including Donizetti's *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* which won the Prix Cecilia in Belgium, and for Chandos he has conducted the award-winning recording of *Tosca*, three recordings of operatic arias (with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague and Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *The Elixir of Love* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier*.



Rosa Mannion



Dennis O'Neill

PETER MOORES, CBE, DL

Peter Moores was born in Lancashire, the son of Sir John Moores, founder of the giant Littlewoods mail order, chain store and football pools group. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he read modern languages – he was already fluent in German and Italian. It was opera, however, which was his great love. He had worked at Glyndebourne Festival Opera before going up to university, and after Oxford he became a production student at the Vienna State Opera, combining this with a three-year course at the Vienna Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

By the end of his third year at the Academy Moores had produced the Vienna premiere of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, had worked as Assistant Producer at the San Carlo Opera House, Naples, the Geneva Festival and Rome Opera, and seemed set for a successful operatic career. At this point he received a letter from his father asking him to come home as he was needed in the firm. Family loyalty being paramount, he returned to Liverpool.

By 1977, he was Chairman of Littlewoods. Three years later he stepped down from the post, although still remaining on the Board. He was a director of a merchant bank from 1978 to 1992. From 1981 to 1983 he was a Governor of the BBC, and a Trustee of the Tate Gallery from 1978 until 1985; from 1988 to 1992 he was a director of Scottish Opera. He received the Gold Medal of the Italian Republic in 1974, an Honorary MA from Christ Church, Oxford, in 1975, and was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. In May 1992 he became Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire, and in the New Year's Honours List for 1991, he was made a CBE for his charitable services to the Arts.



Peter Moores, CBE, DL

Christina Burton/PMF

Whilst still in his early twenties, Peter Moores had started giving financial support to various young artists, several of whom – Joan Sutherland, Colin Davis and the late Geraint Evans amongst them – were to become world-famous. In 1964 he set aside a substantial part of his inheritance to establish the Peter Moores Foundation, a charity designed to support those causes dear to his heart: to make music and the arts more accessible to more people; to give encouragement to the young and to improve race relations.

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

In the field of music, the main areas supported by the Peter Moores Foundation are:

- the recording of operas from the core repertoire sung in English translation; the recording or staging of rare Italian opera from the *bel canto* era of the early nineteenth century (repertoire which would otherwise only be accessible to scholars); the nurturing of promising young opera singers; new operatic work.

The Foundation awards scholarships annually to students and post-graduates for furthering their vocal studies at the Royal Northern College of Music. In addition, project awards may be given to facilitate language tuition in the appropriate country, attendance at masterclasses or summer courses, specialised repertoire study with an acknowledged expert in the field, or post-graduate performance training.

The Foundation encourages new operatic work by contributing to recordings, the publication of scores and stage productions.

Since 1964 the Foundation has supported the recording of more than forty operas, many of these sung in English, in translation. It has always been Peter Moores's belief that to enjoy opera to the full, there must be no language barrier, particularly for newcomers and particularly in the popular repertoire – hence the *Opera in English* series launched with Chandos in 1995. This includes many of the English language recordings funded by the Foundation in the 1970s and 1980s and is now the largest recorded collection of operas sung in English.

Ruggero Leoncavallo: Pagliacci

Der Erfolg eines anderen Komponisten und ein Rechtsfall waren – im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes – für die Entstehung von Leoncavallos *Pagliacci* verantwortlich. Hätte es nicht schon Mascagnis Oper *Cavalleria rusticana* gegeben, die 1890 zuerst aufgeführt wurde, so wäre zu bezweifeln, ob der Verleger Sonzogno Leoncavallos Werk angenommen oder ob der Komponist es ihm überhaupt angeboten hätte.

Die Geschichte des Rechtsfalls reicht in die Kindheit des Komponisten zurück. Sein Vater war Richter, und Leoncavallo erinnerte sich lebhaft an den Prozeß gegen einen Schauspieler, der am Ende einer Aufführung in einem Eifersuchtsanfall seine Frau ermordete. Der Gefangene, offensichtlich eine Figur von tragischer Größe, stellte sich der Anklage – verzweifelt, doch ohne Reue. Noch Jahre später erinnerte sich Leoncavallo daran, wie die rauhe Stimme des Mannes durch den Gerichtssaal tönte. Diese großartige Gestalt, ein Vorbild für Canio, kam ihm nach der Produktion von *Cavalleria rusticana* als Thema für ein kurzes, straffes Drama in den Sinn. Innerhalb von fünf Monaten schrieb er sein eigenes Libretto und komponierte die Musik

dazu. Auf einen späteren Plagiatsvorwurf antwortete er, er habe nur eine wahre Geschichte erzählt, und der erzürnte Autor ließ seine Anklage fallen.

Leoncavallos *Verismo*-Technik überrascht bei einem Mann mit seinem biographischen und musikalischen Hintergrund kaum. Sein Vater war, wie bereits erwähnt, Richter, seine Mutter eine seinerzeit berühmte Malerin in Neapel, wo Leoncavallo am 8. März 1857 geboren wurde. Nachdem er bei verschiedenen Lehrern Klavierunterricht genommen hatte, studierte er am Konservatorium seiner Heimatstadt. Während seiner Studienzeit hörte er in Bologna den *Tannhäuser* – ein Ereignis, das ihn zutiefst bewegte. Als es wenig später in der Stadt zu einer Begegnung mit Wagner kam, beeindruckte ihn dies noch mehr. Anscheinend sagte Wagner zu ihm: “Voyez, je lutte encore” (Sehen Sie, ich kämpfe immer noch). In den folgenden Jahren, in denen Leoncavallo selbst um Anerkennung rang, sollte ihn die Erinnerung an diese Worte trösten. Kurze Zeit nach Abschluß seines Studiums – er hatte mittlerweile sein 18. Lebensjahr erreicht – schrieb Leoncavallo seine erste Oper,

Chatterton, doch alle Versuche, sie zur Aufführung zu bringen, waren vergeblich.

Leoncavallo verdiente nun zunächst seinen Lebensunterhalt durch Klavierspielen und begann mit der Komposition einer von Wagner inspirierten Trilogie mit dem Titel *Crepusculum*, die in der italienischen Renaissance spielt. Auf einer Reise durch den Nahen Osten (1882) wurde ihm in Kairo eine Stellung als Leiter der Militärkapellen angeboten, die er vielleicht auch angenommen hätte, wäre er nicht durch die Aktivitäten der britischen Armee gezwungen worden, als Araber verkleidet nach Ismailia zu fliehen!

Als nächstes vollendete er *I Medici* als Teil der Trilogie, doch obwohl Ricordi für das Werk einen Vertrag unterzeichnet hatte, hielt er es nicht für zur Veröffentlichung geeignet, da er von Leoncavallo eher als Librettist denn als Komponist überzeugt war. Nachdem Leoncavallo sich drei Jahre vergeblich um eine Aufführung bemüht hatte, schrieb er *Pagliacci* und bot diese Oper Ricordis großem Rivalen Sonzogno an. Das Werk wurde zuerst am 21. Mai 1892 im Teatro dal Verme unter Toscanini aufgeführt und war fast unmittelbar ein Erfolg. Dieser Erfolg war so durchschlagend, daß im darauffolgenden Jahr endlich auch *I Medici* zur Aufführung kam – ebenfalls im Teatro dal Verme. Da *I Medici*

aber durchfiel, sah Leoncavallo davon ab, die anderen beiden Teile der Trilogie, *Savonarola* und *Cesare Borgia*, noch zu komponieren; doch 1896 wurde endlich *Chatterton* produziert, und 1897 seine Fassung von *La bohème*, die jedoch von Puccinis wesentlich inspirierterer Vertonung von Murgers Roman völlig in den Schatten gestellt wurde. Als nächstes kam *Zazà* (1900), und damit wären alle Werke des Komponisten genannt, die neben *Pagliacci* heute noch in Italien zu sehen sind.

Bis zu seinem Tod im Jahr 1919 komponierte Leoncavallo weiterhin für die Oper. Zu seinen späteren Werken gehören Kuriositäten wie *Der Roland von Berlin* (1904), auf ausdrücklichen Wunsch von Kaiser Wilhelm II. entstanden, und *Are You There?*, eine 1913 für London geschriebene Operette. Leoncavallo war bereits 1911 in London gewesen, um dort *Pagliacci* und *Zazà* im Hippodrome zu dirigieren, und kehrte im folgenden Jahr in die Stadt zurück, um ein neues, speziell für dieses Theater komponiertes Stück, *Zingari* (Die Zigeuner), aufzuführen. Er bemühte sich jedoch vergeblich, den überragenden Erfolg von *Pagliacci* zu wiederholen, und sein Ruhm wird weiterhin von der Rezeption dieses seines bekanntesten Werks abhängen.

Worin liegen die Faszination und Bedeutung von *Pagliacci*? Hierzu zunächst einige zeitgenössische Äußerungen. Hermann Klein, ein führender Kritiker der Zeit, schrieb in seinen Memoiren von der ersten Londoner Aufführung im Mai 1893 (bei der der Komponist anwesend war): „Der Ruhm von Leoncavallos sensationeller Oper war dem Werk vorausgeeilt, und die Öffentlichkeit erwartete etwas ganz Besonderes. Sie wurde nicht enttäuscht. Ich habe selten ein Publikum so atemlos von der Entwicklung eines Opernplots erregt gesehen.“ Klein fährt fort mit einer Beschreibung und lobenden Würdigung der Sänger, Fernando de Lucia als Canio, die Melba als Nedda und Mario Ancona als Tonio; er fügt hinzu: „Leoncavallo, zurückhaltend und bescheiden, wartete bis zum Schluß ruhig im Hintergrund und mußte dann von den Künstlern auf die Bühne gezwungen werden, um die ihn erwartenden Ovationen entgegenzunehmen... Ich lernte ihn als einen Mann von großer Kultiviertheit und starkem Intellekt kennen. Er ist Dichter ebenso wie er Musiker ist, und in beiden Künsten zeigt er den Zugriff eines originären Denkers.“

Den *Verismo* des Werks preisend bemerkte der *Daily Telegraph*: „Wir scheinen vorerst auf legendäre Helden und nebulöse Mythen

verzichten zu wollen“ – natürlich ein Seitenhieb gegen Wagner. „Solche Persönlichkeiten sind zu entrückt, sie sind nicht Fleisch von unserem Fleisch, nicht Blut von unserem Blut. Heutzutage verlangt man nach dramatischen Geschichten aus dem wirklichem Leben, nach Charakteren, die uns gleich sind und nicht überhöhte Versionen unserer selbst.“ In jüngerer Zeit schrieb der Kritiker Spike Hughes pointierter, Leoncavallo erfülle „ein schon lange bestehendes Bedürfnis“. Hier sei nicht länger der konventionelle romantische Held, noch walteten Gestalten aus nordischen Sagen, sondern wirkliche Menschen, erdverhaftet, leidenschaftlich, voller Leben.

Natürlich ist die Geschichte vom Clown, dessen Herz zerbricht und der doch seine komische Rolle weiterspielen muß, nicht neu; noch ist es der Kunstgriff eines Spiels im Spiel. Leoncavallos Talent war es, diese Dinge in Musik zu kleiden, die anrührte, unmittelbar attraktiv und eingängig war, melodios ohne abgegriffen zu sein. Er war ein versierter Librettist und vermochte es, seine Szenerie durch Beachtung der Aristotelischen Einheit von Zeit und Raum zugleich glaubwürdig zu gestalten und zügig zu entwickeln. Seine Charakterisierungen mögen nicht sehr tiefgehend sein, doch sie sind überzeugend

genug, uns glauben zu machen, daß es sich um wirkliche Personen handelt.

Für seine Vertonung verwendete Leoncavallo gerade nur so viel von Wagners Methoden, wie er benötigte. Es findet sich ein rudimentärer Gebrauch der Leitmotivtechnik, und weder Harmonik noch Orchestrierung wären ohne Wagners Vorbild denkbar. Insgesamt jedoch ist das Werk dezidiert italienischer Prägung: Die Chorpassagen zum Beispiel siedeln die Handlung unverkennbar im südlichen Italien an, und die Musik zeigt einen transalpinen Lyrismus, ganz gleich ob der Komponist unpräzise und sinnlich melodios ist wie in Beppe (Harlekins) Serenade oder Neddas Ballatella, oder überaus leidenschaftlich wie in dem „Ridi, Pagliaccio“ (Make it amusing)-Thema von „Vesti la giubba“ (Put on your costume). Diese und andere Versatzstücke, wie etwa das erotische Duett für Nedda und Silvio, sind nach der Art von Verdis späten Meisterwerken vollkommen in eine einheitliche Struktur integriert.

Ein brillanter *coup de théâtre* gelingt Leoncavallo mit dem Prolog, in dem Tonio seinen Kopf durch den Vorhang steckt, um sodann herauszukommen und dem Publikum zu erklären, daß selbst die Schauspieler Männer und Frauen wie sie sind, leidenschaftlich, voller Freude, voller Leid. Das

Spiel im Spiel erinnert in seiner Relevanz für die Haupthandlung an den gleichen Kunstgriff in *Hamlet* und bietet dem Komponisten eine weitere wirkungsvolle Gelegenheit, wundervolle *commedia dell'arte*-Musik zu schreiben.

In der Aufführung steht und fällt *Pagliacci* mit der Rolle des Canio und ihrer Interpretation. In drei bewegenden Passagen enthüllt Leoncavallo einen ehrlichen Mann, der von Eifersucht und Reue zerstört wird – ein würdiger Nachfolger von Verdis Otello, der auch nach einem Heldenenor gleichen Kalibers verlangt. In „Un tal gioco, credetimi“ (If he tried it, I promise you) verrät der bedrohende Ton, den Nedda nicht als Warnung erkennt, einen kraftvollen Mann, mit dem nicht zu spaßen ist. Nachdem sich in „Vesti la giubba“ (Put on your costume) Neddas Untreue bestätigt hat, wird die Qual einer großen Seele enthüllt, als der Clown seine Gefühle ausschüttet und dabei seine Herzenspein mit noblem Ausdruck vermischt. In „No, Pagliaccio non son“ (No, we're not in a play) schließlich macht Canio seiner treulosen Frau Vorwürfe und schüttet seinen ganzen Kummer aus in der beredtesten Passage, die Leoncavallo je schrieb; sie beginnt mit den Worten „Sperai, tanto il delirio accecato m'aveva“ (I hoped, so blind was I, so deluded

with passion) und erreicht ihren Höhepunkt auf dem hohen H. Wenn diese Stelle so ins Herz sticht wie es der Komponist beabsichtigt hat, so erheben sie die letzten Seiten der Oper vom Melodram auf die Höhe echter Tragödie.

Auch Tonio ist eine interessante Gestalt. Wiederum gibt es eine Zweiteilung, diesmal zwischen dem Narren, der im Spiel Nedda in der Gestalt der Kolumbine den Hof macht, und der deformierten jämmerlichen Figur, die er im wirklichen Leben abgibt und dessen Liebe grausam zurückgewiesen wird. Nedda ist eine gedankenlose Frau, von kaum etwas anderem getrieben als ihren niederen Instinkten. Beppe ist das heitere, friedliebende Mitglied der Truppe. Silvio erfüllt in dieser Oper die Rolle eines bloßen Versatzstücks, obwohl Leoncavallo den schönen Liebhaber einige seiner dankbarsten Partien singen läßt. All diese Charaktere haben ihre Rolle in einem Stück, dessen dramatische Überzeugungskraft noch jedes Publikum bewegt hat.

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Inhaltsangabe

Die Handlung spielt in einem kalabrischen Dorf am Vorabend des Fests Mariae Himmelfahrt. Die Oper beginnt mit einem Prolog, in dem Tonio vor den Vorhang tritt

und zum Publikum spricht; er erinnert die Zuhörer daran, daß es sich bei den Schauspielern um wirkliche Menschen handelt und daß die Geschichte nicht als fiktiv abgetan werden sollte.

I. Akt

Die Dorfbewohner feiern das Fest Mariae Himmelfahrt; als sie sehen, daß die Schauspieler im Dorf angekommen sind, eilen sie ihnen zur Begrüßung entgegen. Canio, der Leiter der Truppe, tritt hervor und teilt den Dorfleuten mit, daß die Aufführung am Abend stattfinden wird. Tonio versucht, Canios Frau Nedda beim Aussteigen aus ihrem Karren behilflich zu sein, doch Canio stößt ihn zur Seite und verpaßt ihm eine Ohrfeige. Einige der Dorfleute bemerken, daß man Tonio und Nedda vielleicht besser nicht alleine zusammenlassen sollte. Canio ist wütend und sagt, daß so etwas in einem Schauspiel als Komödie gelten möge, im wirklichen Leben jedoch hätte es andere Konsequenzen.

Nachdem er sich wieder beruhigt hat, geht er mit Beppe ins Dorf, während die Dorfbewohner den Vespertagsdienst besuchen.

Nedda bleibt alleine zurück; sie macht sich Sorgen über Canios Ausbruch, doch bald entspannt sie sich in der Abendsonne. Tonio

erscheint, und nachdem Nedda ihr Lied beendet hat, spricht er sie an und erklärt ihr seine Liebe. Doch Nedda lacht ihn aus, und er wird immer wütender. Sie sieht sich schließlich gezwungen, ihn mit einer Peitsche ins Gesicht zu schlagen, um sich selbst zu schützen. Er läßt sie allein, schwört jedoch, sich zu rächen.

Unmittelbar nach seinem Abgang erscheint Neddas Liebhaber Silvio. Er drängt sie, nach der Vorstellung am Abend mit ihm davonzulaufen. Sie sträubt sich zunächst, gibt jedoch nach, als Silvio ihre Liebe in Frage stellt. Tonio belauscht einen Teil ihrer Unterhaltung und holt sogleich Canio, der gerade rechtzeitig hinzukommt, um zu hören, wie Nedda dem hinter einer Mauer verschwundenen Silvio etwas zuruft. Nedda weigert sich, Canio den Namen ihres Liebhabers zu verraten. Canio packt die Eifersucht, doch er muß sich für seine Rolle in der Komödie kostümieren. Er ist sich sicher, daß Neddas Liebhaber dem Schauspiel am Abend beiwohnen wird.

II. Akt

Das Publikum (darunter auch Silvio) ist versammelt, und Nedda kassiert das Eintrittsgeld. *Kolumbine* (Nedda) erwartet ihren Liebhaber *Harlekin* (Beppe), da ihr Ehemann *Pagliaccio* (Canio) über Nacht

fortgegangen ist. Von draußen bietet ihr *Harlekin* eine Serenade dar. *Taddeo* (Tonio) tritt ein und eröffnet ihr seine heimliche Liebe, doch sie weist ihn zurück; er geht, als *Harlekin* erscheint. *Harlekin* und *Kolumbine* setzen sich zu einer Mahlzeit nieder, doch unerwartet kehrt *Pagliaccio* zurück und *Harlekin* muß durch das Fenster fliehen. *Kolumbines* Abschiedsworte an *Harlekin* erinnern Canio an Neddas Abschied von ihrem heimlichen Liebhaber früher am Abend. Canio fällt es schwer, in seiner Rolle zu bleiben, und er verlangt von *Kolumbine*/Nedda, den Namen ihres Liebhabers preiszugeben. Nedda versucht verzweifelt, ihre Rolle weiterzuspielen, doch Canio wird immer wütender. Die Zuschauer werden unruhig, und Nedda versucht zu entfliehen. Doch es gelingt Canio, sie zu ergreifen, und er ersticht sie. Silvio eilt herbei und versucht sie zu retten, doch auch er wird erstochen. Schockiert von seiner Tat verkündet Canio dem Publikum, daß das Schauspiel vorbei ist.

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Übersetzung: Stephanie Wollny

Alan Opie wurde in Cornwall geboren und studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama und dem London Opera Centre. Er war viele Jahre lang erster Bariton an der

English National Opera und hatte außerdem Engagements an allen großen britischen Opernhäusern, darunter das Royal Opera Covent Garden, die Glyndebourne Festival Opera und Opera North. Im Ausland führten ihn Gastspiele nach Bayreuth, Paris, Amsterdam, Chicago, Mailand, München, Berlin, Wien, Brüssel und an die Metropolitan Opera in New York.

Für *Peter Grimes* (in der Chandos-Produktion) und *Die Meistersinger* (mit dem Chicago Symphony Orchestra unter Solti) wurde Alan Opie mit *Grammy Awards* ausgezeichnet. Zu seinen weiteren Aufnahmen gehören *Il barbiere di Siviglia* und *La bohème* (bei Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation), sowie *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Gloriana* und *Troilus and Cressida* (diese Produktion wurde wiederum von der Peter Moores Foundation gefördert und bei Chandos aufgenommen).

Dennis O'Neill, der als Sohn irischer und walischer Eltern in Wales geboren wurde, ist einer der führenden Tenöre der Welt und Verdi-Spezialist. Er unterhält seit langem Verbindungen zur Londoner Royal Opera Covent Garden und hat dort in letzter Zeit Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos und Radames (*Aida*) gesungen.

In Nordamerika war er unter anderem an der Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* und *Rigoletto*), an der Chicago Lyric Opera, an den Opernhäusern von San Francisco, San Diego und Vancouver engagiert und hat Konzerte mit den Sinfonieorchestern von Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal und Ottawa sowie beim Cincinnati Festival gegeben. Er ist häufig an der Bayerischen Staatsoper in München zu Gast und ist in Europa außerdem an den Opernhäusern von Wien, Bonn, Köln, Nizza, Zürich, Paris, Oslo, Brüssel und Barcelona aufgetreten.

Zu seinen zahlreichen Aufnahmen zählen Soloalben, Verdis Requiem mit Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* mit Slatkin und folgende Videos: *Der Rosenkavalier* mit Solti, *Die Fledermaus* mit Kiri te Kanawa unter der Leitung von Plácido Domingo, *Macbeth* mit Sinopoli und *Mefistofele* für San Francisco Opera. Für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation hat er *Tosca*, *La bohème* und ein Soloalbum aufgezeichnet.

Peter Bronder wurde in Hertfordshire als Kind deutscher und österreichischer Eltern geboren. Er studierte an der Royal Academy of Music und am National Opera Studio. Nach einer Spielzeit an der Glyndebourne Festival Opera war er von 1986 bis 1990 erster Tenor der

Welsh National Opera; sein dortiges Repertoire umfasste Hauptrollen in *La bohème*, *La traviata*, *I puritani*, *La sonnambula*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte* und *Eugen Onegin*. Er trat außerdem in der English National Opera auf (Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Vanya in *Kát'a Kabanová*), ferner in der Opera North (Hauptmann in *Wozzeck*), der Scottish Opera (Leicester in *Maria Stuarda*) und der Royal Opera Covent Garden (Cassio in *Otello*, Erscheinung der Jugend in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*).

Rosa Mannion wurde in Liverpool geboren und studierte an der Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama; zur Zeit ist sie Schülerin von Gerald Martin Moore. 1993 gab sie ihr Royal Opera Covent Garden Debüt als Pamina; seither ist sie in allen führenden britischen Opernhäusern aufgetreten. Ihr Repertoire umfaßt die Constanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, die Cordelia in Aribert Reimanns *Lear*, die Sophie in *Werther*, die Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*, die Atalanta in *Xerxes*, die Gräfin in *Le nozze di Figaro*, die Magnolia in *Showboat*, die Violetta in *La traviata*, die vier Sopranrollen in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* sowie die Titelrolle in *Manon*.

Ihre Diskographie umfaßt *Così fan tutte* unter John Eliot Gardiner, *Die Zauberflöte* und *Orlando* unter William Christie, ferner Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* und dessen Dritte Sinfonie sowie Beethovens *Missa solennis*.

William Dazeley ist Absolvent des Jesus College in Cambridge und hat an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama Gesang studiert. Unter seinen Auszeichnungen sind der Decca-Kathleen-Ferrier-Preis zu nennen, der Richard-Tauber-Preis und der internationale Liederpreis Walther Gruner. Sein umfangreiches Opernrepertoire schließt die Titelrollen von *Don Giovanni*, *Owen Wingrave*, *Billy Budd* und *Eugen Onegin* ein, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Pelléas, Mowgli (Michael Berkeleys *Baa Baa Black Sheep*), Danilo (*Die lustige Witwe*) sowie den Grafen und Rudolph (*Der ferne Klang*). Er ist an der Royal Opera Covent Garden, der Opera North und der Glyndebourne Touring Opera aufgetreten, am Teatro regio in Turin, an der Opéra de Lyon und der New Israeli Opera. Er hat unter anderem *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, Britten's *The Rescue of Penelope*, Busonis *Doktor Faust*, und *La bohème* (für Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation) auf Tonträger aufgezeichnet.

Geoffrey Mitchell hat im Lauf seiner Gesangskarriere ein erstaunlich umfangreiches Repertoire erschlossen, von alter bis hin zu zeitgenössischer Musik. Daraus ergaben sich erst Dirigieraufträge von der BBC, dann eine ausgedehntere Zusammenarbeit mit seinen Sängern, die wiederum zur Gründung des **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir** führte. Frühe Schallplattenaufnahmen hatten zur Folge, daß der Chor langfristige Beziehungen zu Opera Rara einging, für die er 15 Opern aufgezeichnet hat. Derzeit genießt er dank weiterer Verpflichtungen für die BBC und internationale Schallplattenfirmen wachsendes Ansehen.

Der Kinderchor **Peter Kay Children's Choir** bietet jungen Sängern Gelegenheit, in Opern und Konzerten aufzutreten, in Werbespots (TV und Radio), bei Wohltätigkeitsveranstaltungen, auf Festivals und in Bühnenproduktionen in Großbritannien, Frankreich, Belgien, den Niederlanden, Deutschland, Spanien und den USA. Neue Mitglieder werden auf Einladung und durch Vorsingen gewonnen, deren Teilnehmer bereits Erfahrungen mit Gesangsauftritten gemacht haben, und zwar an der English National Opera, wo Peter Kay als Children's Adviser – Kinderberater – tätig ist, in der Finchley

Children's Music Group, im New London Children's Choir, bei den Jennifer Lilleystone Singers und an Schulen überall in London und im Süden Englands.

Seit seiner Gründung im Jahr 1932 durch Sir Thomas Beecham hat das **London Philharmonic Orchestra** unter der Leitung unzähliger prominenter Chefdirigenten gestanden, darunter Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti und Klaus Tennstedt. Im Augenblick zählen zu seinen regulären Dirigenten der Musikdirektor des Orchesters, Franz Welser-Möst und der Präsident, Bernard Haitink.

Seit 1964 ist das London Philharmonic Orchestra Residenzorchester bei der Glyndebourne Festival Opera und seit 1992 an der Royal Festival Hall. Es unternimmt zahlreiche Konzertreisen und besuchte als erstes britisches Orchester die UdSSR und China. Seine Platteneinspielungen sind vielfach preisgekrönt worden.

David Parry studierte bei Sergiu Celibidache und begann seine Laufbahn als Sir John Pritchards musikalischer Assistent. Er debütierte mit dem English Music Theatre und wurde Kapellmeister an den Städtischen Bühnen Dortmund sowie an Opera North in

Leeds. Von 1983 bis 1987 fungierte er als Musikdirektor für Opera 80 und seit 1992 ist er der Musikdirektor (und Gründer) des zeitgenössischen Opern-Festivals Almeida Opera.

Parrys Tätigkeitsbereich ist nicht nur das Opernhaus, sondern auch der Konzertsaal. Sein Repertoire erstreckt sich von Mozart und der italienischen Oper des frühen 19. Jahrhunderts bis zu Janáček, Britten und zeitgenössischer Musik. In England dirigiert er regelmäßig an der English National Opera und konzertiert mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra. 1996 machte er mit *Così fan tutte* sein Debüt bei dem Glyndebourne Festival.

David Parry gastiert häufig in Spanien, wo er bereits mit den meisten Opernkompanien und Sinfonieorchestern aufgetreten ist. Die spanische Premiere von *Peter Grimes* fand unter seiner Leitung in Madrid statt; 1996 dirigierte er die erste spanische Inszenierung von *The Rake's Progress* (Strawinsky) und weihte zwei neue Konzertsäle mit der Neunten Sinfonie von Beethoven

sowie ein neues Opernhaus mit *Carmen* ein. In Italien leitete er *Ricciardo e Zoraide* bei dem Rossini-Festival in Pesaro. Er tritt in Frankreich, Deutschland, Belgien, den Niederlanden und Schweden auf, wo er eine gefeierte Inszenierung von Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* dirigierte.

Außerhalb Europas ist David Parry bei dem Hongkong International Festival und mit dem UNAM Symphony Orchestra in Mexico City aufgetreten, war mit *Carmen* in Japan auf Tournee und leitete eine Neuinszenierung von *Kát'a Kabanová* für das Festival in Neuseeland.

Parry hat zahlreiche Werke für das Label Opera Rara eingespielt, u.a. *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* von Donizetti, das in Belgien mit dem Prix Cecilia ausgezeichnet wurde; für Chandos hat er eine preisgekrönte *Tosca* aufgenommen, drei Aufnahmen operatischen Arien (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague und Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *L'elisir d'amore* und Auszüge vom *Rosenkavalier*.

Ruggero Leoncavallo: Pagliacci

C'est au succès d'un autre compositeur et à un procès que le *Pagliacci* (Paillasse) de Leoncavallo doit d'exister. Sans *Cavalleria rusticana* de Mascagni, qui fut mise en scène en 1890, il est peu probable que l'éditeur Sonzogno eût accepté l'œuvre de Leoncavallo, ou même que le compositeur la lui eût présentée.

L'histoire du procès remonte à l'enfance du compositeur. Son père était juge et Leoncavallo se rappelait très nettement – ce qui n'est guère surprenant – du procès d'un acteur qui, saisi de jalousie, avait tué sa femme à la fin d'une représentation. Le prisonnier, apparemment personnage aux dimensions tragiques, fit face à l'accusation, accablé de douleur et pourtant inflexible. Des années plus tard, Leoncavallo se rappelait encore de la voix rude de l'homme, qui résonnait dans le tribunal. Il lui vint à l'esprit, après la mise en scène de *Cavalleria rusticana*, que cette silhouette impressionnante, le modèle de Canio, pourrait faire le sujet d'un court drame poignant. Il en écrivit le livret et la mise en musique en cinq mois. Lorsqu'il fut plus tard poursuivi pour plagiat, il lui suffit de

raconter que c'était une histoire véridique pour que l'auteur courroucé abandonnât toute poursuite.

La technique vériste de Leoncavallo ne surprend guère de la part d'un homme ayant ses antécédents familiaux et musicaux. Comme nous l'avons vu, son père était juge, sa mère peintre qui jouissait alors d'une certaine réputation dans la ville de Naples où le compositeur était né le 8 mars 1857. Il fut l'élève de plusieurs professeurs de piano avant d'entrer au conservatoire de Naples. Pendant ses années estudiantines, il entendit *Tannhäuser* à Bologne et en fut très impressionné, mais, peu après, une rencontre avec Wagner dans cette ville l'impressionna encore davantage. Wagner lui aurait apparemment dit: "Voyez, je lutte encore." Le souvenir de ces paroles apporta du réconfort à Leoncavallo durant les années où il dut lui-même lutter pour être reconnu. Peu après avoir achevé ses études, à l'âge de dix-huit ans, il écrivit son premier opéra *Chatterton*, mais, en dépit de ses efforts, ne parvint pas à le faire jouer.

Tandis qu'il gagnait sa vie en jouant du piano, il se mit à composer une trilogie

d'inspiration wagnérienne, intitulée *Crepusculum*, qui avait trait à la Renaissance en Italie. A un moment donné, au cours d'une tournée au Moyen-Orient (1882), il se vit offrir un poste de chef de musique militaire au Caire. Peut-être aurait-il accepté si les activités de l'armée britannique ne l'avaient pas forcé à s'enfuir à Ismaïlia déguisé en Arabe!

Il acheva ensuite *I Medici*, une partie de sa trilogie, mais bien que Ricordi eût signé un contrat pour l'œuvre, ce dernier ne jugea pas utile de la publier, étant plus impressionné par les dons de poète lyrique de Leoncavallo que par ses dons de compositeur. Après avoir passé trois années à tenter de faire jouer l'œuvre, le compositeur écrivit *Pagliacci* qu'il présenta à Ricordi, le grand rival de Sonzogno. L'opéra fut créé au Teatro dal Verme, le 21 mai 1892, sous la direction de Toscanini, et remporta un succès quasi-immédiat. Ce succès fut tel que l'année suivante *I Medici* parvint enfin à être joué – dans le même théâtre. Ce fut un échec, et Leoncavallo ne chercha pas à faire jouer les autres parties de la trilogie, *Savonarola* et *Cesare Borgia*, toutefois *Chatterton* finit par être mis en scène (1896), suivi par une version de *La bohème* (1897), d'ailleurs quasiment éclipsée par la mise en musique plus inspirée que fit Puccini du roman de Murger. *Zazà* vint ensuite (1900), et ce sont là toutes les

œuvres du compositeur continuant à être représentées de nos jours en Italie, en plus de *Pagliacci*.

Il continua d'écrire jusqu'à sa mort en 1919. Ses dernières œuvres incluent des compositions étonnantes comme *Der Roland von Berlin* (1904), écrite sur la commande expresse du Kaiser Guillaume II, et *Are You There?*, opérette écrite pour la scène de Londres en 1913. Leoncavallo qui s'était déjà rendu à Londres en 1911 pour diriger *Pagliacci* et *Zazà* à l'Hippodrome, y retourna l'année suivante pour diriger une nouvelle composition, *Zingari* (Les bohémiens), écrite spécialement pour ce théâtre. Ses efforts pour réitérer l'énorme succès de *Pagliacci* se montrèrent vains, et sa réputation continue d'être assise sur la survie de son œuvre la plus célèbre.

En quoi l'œuvre nous fascine-t-elle? Que vaut-elle? Examinons d'abord quelques opinions d'alors. Hermann Klein, grand critique de l'époque, relata dans ses mémoires la première à Londres de l'opéra qui eut lieu en mai 1893 (en présence du compositeur): "La renommée du sensationnel opéra de Leoncavallo l'avait précédé, et le public s'attendait à voir quelque chose de remarquable. Il ne fut pas déçu. J'ai rarement vu une salle tenue en haleine de la sorte par le développement d'une intrigue d'opéra." Puis il

décrit les participants et en fait l'éloge, Fernando de Lucia en Canio, Melba en Nedda et Mario Ancona en Tonio, ajoutant: "Leoncavallo, modeste et sans prétentions, attendit tranquillement dans l'ombre jusqu'à la fin, puis les artistes durent le faire entrer de force sur la scène pour répondre à l'ovation qui l'attendait... J'ai trouvé que c'était un homme fort cultivé et d'une grande intelligence. Il est à la fois poète et musicien et, dans ces deux arts, il montre l'emprise d'un penseur accompli."

Vantant le vérisme de l'œuvre, le *Daily Telegraph* émit l'opinion suivante: "Il semble que, pour le moment, nous en ayons fini des héros légendaires et des mythes nébuleux" – ce qui était bien sûr une pointe envoyée à Wagner – "Leurs personnages sont bien trop éloignés de nous: ils ne sont ni de notre chair, ni de notre sang. De nos jours, on exige des documents authentiquement humains, des personnages de récits et de théâtre qui sont comme nous, et non pas l'exagération de nous-mêmes." Plus récemment, et de façon plus succincte, le critique Spike Hughes écrivit que Leoncavallo avait satisfait "un besoin longtemps ressenti". On ne se trouvait plus en présence d'un héros romantique conventionnel, ni même du retour persistant de personnages issus des sagas nordiques, mais de personnages authentiques, terre à terre, passionnés, pleins de vie.

L'histoire du clown dont le cœur est brisé mais qui doit continuer à jouer son rôle comique jusqu'au bout n'est bien sûr pas nouvelle; pas plus que le procédé qui insère une pièce à l'intérieur d'une autre pièce. L'art de Leoncavallo fut de revêtir ces procédés d'une musique à la fois touchante, immédiatement accessible et agréable, mais mélodieuse sans être vulgaire. C'était un librettiste accompli, qui en respectant l'unité de lieu et de temps aristotélicienne produisit un scénario immédiatement crédible et dépourvu de lenteur. Il se peut qu'il ait campé ses personnages sans grande profondeur, mais il les a rendus suffisamment convaincants pour nous faire croire qu'ils sont réels.

Pour sa partition, Leoncavallo n'emprunta que le nécessaire aux méthodes wagnériennes. On y trouve une utilisation rudimentaire du *Leitmotiv*, et l'harmonie et l'orchestration n'auraient certainement pu être les mêmes si Wagner n'avait existé. Toutefois, il se dégage de l'ensemble de l'œuvre une saveur bien italienne: les passages choraux, par exemple, situent l'action en Italie du Sud, et, que le compositeur écrive des passages d'une beauté voluptueuse et sans prétention comme dans la sérénade de Beppe (en Arlequin) ou la ballatella de Nedda, ou des morceaux passionnés comme dans le thème "Ridi,

Pagliaccio" (Make it amusing) de "Vesti la giubba" (Put on your costume), la musique exhale un lyrisme transalpin. Ces passages et d'autres, comme le duo érotique de Nedda et Silvio, sont pleinement intégrés dans une structure unifiée à la manière des derniers chefs-d'œuvre de Verdi.

Leoncavallo réussit un brillant coup de théâtre avec le Prologue dans lequel Tonio passe la tête entre les rideaux, puis s'avance pour raconter directement aux membres du public que les acteurs eux-mêmes sont des hommes et des femmes comme eux, avec leurs passions, leurs joies et leurs souffrances. La pièce insérée dans l'autre pièce, rappelant en quelque sorte celle d'*Hamlet* par le rapport qui la lie à l'action principale, est une autre invention efficace qui inspire une délicieuse musique de *commedia dell'arte* au compositeur.

Sur scène, la réussite de *Pagliacci* repose sur l'écriture et l'interprétation du rôle de Canio. À l'aide de trois passages émouvants, Leoncavallo dépeint un honnête homme abattu par la jalousie et le remords, digne successeur de l'Otello de Verdi, et nécessitant un ténor héroïque de même envergure. Dans "Un tal gioco, creditimi" (If he tried it, I promise you), le ton de la menace, avertissement ignoré par Nedda, nous montre un homme plein de

puissance, à ne pas traiter à la légère. Dans "Vesti la giubba" (Put on your costume), après que l'infidélité de Nedda a été confirmée, nous voyons une âme noble assaillie par le tourment tandis que le clown déverse ses sentiments, le chagrin se mêlant à la noblesse d'expression. Finalement, avec "No, Pagliaccio non son" (No, we're not in a play), Canio fait des reproches à son épouse infidèle, donnant libre cours à son chagrin dans le passage le plus éloquent jamais écrit par Leoncavallo, commençant par "Sperai, tanto il delirio accettato m'aveva" (I hoped, so blind was I, so deluded with passion) pour atteindre un sommet en si aigu. Si ce passage perce le cœur, comme de juste, il fait passer les dernières pages de l'opéra du mélodrame à la vraie tragédie.

Tonio est aussi une création intéressante. On se trouve à nouveau en présence d'une dichotomie, cette fois entre le bouffon courtisant Nedda en Colombine dans la pièce, et la silhouette difforme et pathétique voyant dans la réalité son amour pour la jeune femme cruellement repoussé à coups de fouet. Nedda est une femme sans discernement, qui ne semble guidée que par ses désirs instinctifs. Beppe est l'aimable membre pacificateur de la troupe, tandis que Silvio fait en quelque sorte figure de nullité opératique, bien que Leoncavallo donne à cet amant de belle mine

une de ses musiques les plus élégantes. Tous jouent leur rôle dans cette composition si convaincante sur le plan dramatique qu'elle ne manque jamais d'émouvoir son public.

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Traduction: Marianne Fernée

Argument

L'action se déroule dans un village de Calabre à la veille de la fête de l'Assomption. L'opéra débute par un prologue durant lequel Tonio apparaît devant le rideau et s'adresse au public, lui rappelant que les acteurs sont des personnes réelles et que l'histoire ne doit pas être considérée comme une fiction.

Acte I

Les villageois célèbrent la fête de l'Assomption et lorsqu'ils voient les comédiens pénétrer dans le village, ils se précipitent pour les accueillir. Canio, le chef de la troupe, vient au devant d'eux et déclare à l'assemblée des villageois que la représentation aura lieu le soir même. Tonio tente d'aider l'épouse de Canio, Nedda, à descendre de la charette dans laquelle elle est arrivée mais Canio le repousse et lui donne une gifle. Quelques villageois remarquent qu'il ne faudrait peut-être pas laisser Tonio et Nedda se retrouver seuls. Canio est en colère et dit que,

dans une comédie, ce genre d'incident pourrait passer pour drôle, mais que, dans la réalité, les événements risqueraient de prendre une tournure bien différente. Lorsqu'il s'est calmé, lui et Beppe se rendent au village et les villageois partent aux vêpres.

Restée seule, Nedda s'inquiète de l'éclat de Canio, mais bientôt le crépuscule exerce sur elle son effet apaisant. Tonio apparaît et, à la fin de sa chanson, il s'approche d'elle et lui déclare son amour. Mais Nedda se rit de lui, ce qui excite sa colère. Elle doit finalement se défendre en le frappant au visage avec son fouet. Il s'en va tout en jurant de se venger.

Peu après son départ, l'amant de Nedda, Silvio, fait son apparition. Il la presse de s'enfuir avec lui après la représentation du soir. D'abord elle refuse, mais lorsque Silvio l'interroge au sujet de son amour pour lui, elle se laisse fléchir. Tonio entend une partie de leur conversation et s'empresse d'aller chercher Canio qui arrive juste à temps pour l'entendre appeler Silvio qui a disparu derrière le mur. Nedda refuse d'avouer à Canio le nom de son amant. Canio, rongé par la jalousie, revêt son costume de scène. Il est persuadé que l'amant assistera à la représentation de la soirée.

Acte II

Le public (y compris Silvio) est réuni et Nedda

collecte l'argent. La pièce commence. *Colombine* (Nedda) attend son amoureux *Arlequin* (Beppe), car son mari *Pagliaccio* (Canio) est absent pour la nuit. Dehors, *Arlequin* lui donne la sérénade. *Taddeo* (Tonio) entre et déclare son amour secret pour elle mais celle-ci le dédaigne et il s'en va au moment où arrive *Arlequin*. *Arlequin* et *Colombine* s'assoient et mangent mais *Pagliaccio* revient à l'improviste et *Arlequin* s'échappe par la fenêtre. Ses mots d'adieu à l'intention d'*Arlequin* rappellent à Canio l'adieu de Nedda à son amant mystérieux un peu plus tôt dans la soirée. Canio parvient difficilement à demeurer dans le strict cadre de son personnage et exige de *Colombine*/Nedda qu'elle lui avoue le nom de son amant. Nedda essaie désespérément de s'en tenir à son rôle, mais Canio entre dans une colère de plus en plus noire. Les spectateurs s'impatientent et Nedda tente de s'échapper. Mais Canio parvient à l'empoigner et la poignarde. Silvio accourt pour la sauver, mais il est poignardé à son tour. Canio complètement sous le choc, annonce à l'assistance que la représentation est terminée.

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Traduction: Karin Py

Alan Opie est né en Cornouailles et a fait ses études à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama et au London Opera Centre. Principal baryton de l'English National Opera pendant plusieurs saisons, il a également chanté avec les principales troupes lyriques britanniques comme le Royal Opera Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera et Opera North. Sa carrière internationale l'a conduit sur les scènes lyriques de Bayreuth, Paris, Amsterdam, Chicago, Milan, Munich, Berlin, Vienne, Bruxelles et New York (The Metropolitan Opera).

Alan Opie a remporté un *Grammy* pour son enregistrement de *Peter Grimes* (chez Chandos) et celui des *Meistersinger* (avec le Chicago Symphony Orchestra placé sous la direction de Solti). Il a également gravé *Il barbiere di Siviglia* et *La bohème* (pour Chandos en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation), *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Gloriana* et *Troilus and Cressida* (une production financée par la Peter Moores Foundation et enregistrée par Chandos).

Né au Pays de Galles de parents irlandais et gallois, **Dennis O'Neill** est l'un des grands ténors de notre temps, et un spécialiste des œuvres de Verdi. Il jouit d'une longue association avec le théâtre de Royal Opera

Covent Garden de Londres où il a chanté récemment les rôles de Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos et Radames (*Aida*).

En Amérique du Nord, il s'est produit au Metropolitan Opera de New York (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* et *Rigoletto*), à Lyric Opera de Chicago, à San Francisco, San Diego et à l'Opéra de Vancouver. Il a également donné des concerts avec les orchestres de Philadelphie, Cleveland, Montréal, Ottawa et dans le cadre du festival de Cincinnati. En Europe, il est fréquemment invité par le Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich, et a chanté dans les opéras de Vienne, Bonn, Cologne, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Bruxelles et Barcelone.

Son importante discographie comporte des albums en soliste, le Requiem de Verdi avec Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* avec Slatkin, des vidéos de *Der Rosenkavalier* avec Solti, *Die Fledermaus* avec Kiri te Kanawa sous la direction de Plácido Domingo, *Macbeth* avec Sinopoli, et *Mefistofele* pour le San Francisco Opera. Pour Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation, il a enregistré *Tosca*, *La bohème* et un album en soliste.

Peter Bronder est né à Hertfordshire de parents d'origine allemande et autrichienne. Il fit ses études à le Royal Academy of Music

ainsi qu'au National Opera Studio à Londres. Après une saison à Glyndebourne Festival Opera, il devient le premier ténor de Welsh National Opera de 1986 à 1990, où son répertoire comprenait des rôles principaux dans *La bohème*, *La traviata*, *I puritani*, *La sonnambula*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte* et *Eugène Onéguine*. Il a également fait des apparitions à l'English National Opera (Almaviva dans *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Vanya dans *Kat'a Kabanová*), à l'Opera North (le Capitaine dans *Wozzeck*), à le Scottish Opera (Leicester dans *Maria Stuarda*) ainsi qu'au Royal Opera Covent Garden (Cassio dans *Otello*, l'apparition de la Jeunesse dans *Die Frau ohne Schatten*).

Rosa Mannion est née à Liverpool et étudia à la Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama et elle poursuit actuellement sa formation auprès de Gerald Martin Moore. Elle fit ses débuts au Royal Opera Covent Garden dans Pamina en 1993 et elle chanté avec les plus grandes compagnies britanniques dans des rôles tels que Constance (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Cordélia (*Lear* de Aribert Reimann), Sophie (*Werther*), Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Atalanta (*Xerxes*), La Comtesse (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Magnolia

(*Showboat*), Violetta (*La traviata*), ainsi que les quatre rôles de soprano dans *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* et le rôle titre dans *Manon*.

Ses enregistrements comprennent *Così fan tutte* avec John Eliot Gardiner, *Die Zauberflöte* et *Orlando* avec William Christie, la *Serenade to Music* et la Troisième Symphonie de Vaughan Williams ainsi que la *Missa solemnis* de Beethoven.

William Dazeley est diplômé du Jesus College de Cambridge, et a étudié le chant à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres. Il est lauréat du Decca-Kathleen Ferrier Prize, du Richard Tauber Prize et du Walther Gruner International Lieder Prize. Son vaste répertoire inclut les rôles titres de *Don Giovanni*, *Owen Wingrave*, *Billy Budd* et *Eugène Onéguine*, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Pelléas, Mowgli (*Baa Baa Black Sheep* de Michael Berkeley), Danilo (*Die lustige Witwe*) et le Comte et Rudolph (*Der ferne Klang*). Il s'est produit au Royal Opera Covent Garden, à l'Opera North, avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, au Teatro regio de Turin, à l'Opéra de Lyon et au New Israeli Opera. Parmi ses enregistrements figurent *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, *The Rescue of Penelope* de Britten, *Doktor Faust* de Busoni, et *La bohème* (pour Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation).

La carrière de chanteur de Geoffrey Mitchell a couvert un répertoire d'une remarquable étendue allant de la musique ancienne à la musique contemporaine. Elle prit son essor à la suite de plusieurs invitations à diriger que lui offrit la BBC, et à une collaboration plus étroite avec ses propres chanteurs. C'est ainsi qu'il fut amené à fonder le **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir** avec lequel il a enregistré quinze opéras pour Opera Rara. Jouissant d'une réputation grandissante, ils ont d'autres projets avec la BBC et des maisons de disques internationales.

The Peter Kay Children's Choir offre à de jeunes chanteurs la possibilité de se produire à l'opéra, au concert, à la télévision, à la radio, lors de galas de bienfaisance, dans des festivals et des productions théâtrales en Grande-Bretagne, en France, en Belgique, aux Pays-Bas, en Allemagne, en Espagne et aux États-Unis. Ses membres sont recrutés sur invitation et sur audition, attirant des participants possédant déjà une expérience de la scène à l'English National Opera où Peter Kay est conseiller pour enfants, et au le Finchley Children's Music Group, le New London Children's Choir, les Jennifer Lilleystone Singers, et dans des écoles de Londres et du sud de l'Angleterre.

Le **London Philharmonic Orchestra**, qui a été formé par Sir Thomas Beecham en 1932, a attiré au fil des années une série inégalable de premiers chefs, dont Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti et Klaus Tennstedt. Parmi les chefs qui le dirigent régulièrement à l'heure actuelle se trouvent son directeur musical, Franz Welser-Möst, et son président, Bernard Haitink.

L'orchestre, qui est depuis 1964 l'orchestre symphonique en résidence au Glyndebourne Festival Opera, est devenu en 1992 l'orchestre symphonique en résidence au Royal Festival Hall. Il effectue aussi de vastes tournées – il a été le premier orchestre à se rendre en URSS et en Chine – et ses enregistrements ont remporté maintes récompenses prestigieuses.

David Parry étudia avec Sergiu Celibidache et commença sa carrière comme assistant de Sir John Pritchard. Il fit ses débuts avec l'English Music Theatre et devint plus tard chef appointé du Städtische Bühnen Dortmund et d'Opera North. Directeur musical d'Opera 80 de 1983 à 1987, il est depuis 1992 le directeur musical fondateur du festival d'opéra contemporain Almeida Opera.

Il poursuit une carrière très active à l'opéra et dans les salles de concert. Son répertoire va de Mozart et de l'opéra italien du début

du XIXe siècle à Janáček, Britten et à la musique contemporaine. En Angleterre, il a fait des apparitions régulières à l'English National Opera et lors de concerts avec le Philharmonia Orchestra. En 1996, il a fait ses débuts au Festival de Glyndebourne avec *Così fan tutte*.

Il se rend fréquemment en Espagne où il s'est produit avec la plupart des troupes d'opéra et des orchestres symphoniques. Il a donné la première espagnole de *Peter Grimes* à Madrid et, en 1996, a dirigé la première mise en scène espagnole de *The Rake's Progress*. Il a aussi inauguré deux nouvelles salles de concert avec une interprétation de la Neuvième Symphonie de Beethoven et un nouvel opéra avec *Carmen*. Il s'est également produit en Italie où il a dirigé *Ricciardo e Zoraide* au Festival d'opéra de Pesaro (consacré à Rossini), mais il s'est aussi rendu en France, en Allemagne, en Belgique, aux Pays-Bas, et en Suède où il a dirigé une mise en scène très applaudie du *Midsummer Night's Dream* de Britten.

Hors d'Europe, David Parry s'est produit au Festival international de Hong Kong, a dirigé l'UNAM Symphony Orchestra à Mexico, a fait une tournée consacrée à *Carmen* au Japon, et, en 1996, a dirigé une nouvelle mise en scène de *Kat'a Kabanová* au Festival de Nouvelle-Zélande.

Il a réalisé un grand nombre d'enregistrements pour le label Opera Rara, entre autres *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* de Donizetti, qui a remporté le prix Cecilia en Belgique, et c'est chez Chandos qu'il a dirigé

son enregistrement primé de *Tosca*, trois disques d'aries operatiques (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague et Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *L'elisir d'amore* et extraits du *Rosenkavalier*.

Ruggero Leoncavallo: Pagliacci

Il successo di un altro compositore ed un processo in tribunale furono, in senso assai reale, i progenitori di *Pagliacci* di Leoncavallo. Se non fosse stato per *Cavalleria rusticana* di Mascagni, rappresentata nel 1890, c'è da chiedersi se l'editore Sonzogno avrebbe accettato l'opera di Leoncavallo o se il compositore gliela avrebbe persino portata.

La storia del processo risale all'infanzia del compositore. Suo padre era magistrato e non sorprende che Leoncavallo abbia conservato vivida memoria del processo di un attore che, in un attacco di gelosia, aveva ucciso la moglie alla fine di una rappresentazione. L'accusato – a quanto pare una figura di tragica potenza – aveva fatto fronte all'accusa, accasciato dal dolore ma con irremovibile fermezza. Anni dopo Leoncavallo ricordava la ruvida voce dell'uomo che risuonava attraverso il tribunale. Questa temibile figura, modello per Canio, gli balzò alla mente quale soggetto per un dramma breve e conciso dopo la rappresentazione di *Cavalleria rusticana*. Scrisse il libretto e compose la musica in cinque mesi. Citato in seguito per plagio, bastò che rivelasse la vera storia perché l'irato autore ritirasse l'accusa.

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La tecnica verista di Leoncavallo non è inaspettata in un uomo con i suoi precedenti biografici e musicali. Suo padre, come si è visto, era magistrato, sua madre una pittrice a quel tempo famosa a Napoli, dove il compositore era nato il 8 marzo 1857. Leoncavallo studiò con vari maestri di piano prima d'isciversi al Conservatorio di Napoli. Mentre era studente assistette ad una esecuzione del *Tannhäuser* a Bologna, un'esperienza che gli fece una profonda impressione. Un incontro con Wagner nella stessa città poco dopo lo colpì ancora più profondamente. A quanto pare Wagner gli disse: "Voyez, je lutte encore" (Vedete, mi batto ancora). La memoria di quelle parole rincuorò Leoncavallo durante gli anni in cui lui stesso si batteva per farsi apprezzare. Poco dopo aver finito gli studi, quando aveva diciotto anni, compose la sua prima opera, *Chatterton*, ma gli sforzi per farla rappresentare rimasero futili.

Mentre si guadagnava da vivere suonando il piano cominciò a comporre una trilogia d'ispirazione wagneriana, intitolata *Crepusculum*, ambientata nell'Italia

rinascimentale. Ad un certo punto di un suo viaggio nel Medio Oriente (1882) gli venne offerto al Cairo l'incarico di dirigente delle bande militari, impiego che forse avrebbe accettato se le attività dell'esercito britannico non lo avessero costretto a rifugiarsi ad Ismailia travestito da arabo!

I Medici, parte della sua trilogia, venne successivamente completata ma sebbene Ricordi avesse firmato un contratto per l'opera non ritenne opportuno pubblicarla, avendo una migliore opinione di Leoncavallo come poeta del teatro che come musicista. Dopo aver tentato per tre anni di farla eseguire, Leoncavallo scrisse *Pagliacci* che diede a Sonzogno, grande rivale di Ricordi. L'opera ebbe quasi immediato successo allorché venne rappresentata al Teatro dal Verme il 21 maggio 1892. Tale fu il successo che l'anno dopo *I Medici* venne finalmente messa in scena – nello stesso teatro. Poiché fece fiasco Leoncavallo non persistette con le parti rimanenti della trilogia, *Savonarola* e *Cesare Borgia*, ma *Chatterton* finì per essere rappresentata nel 1896; fece seguito la sua versione di *La bohème* (1897), che venne virtualmente eclissata dalla più ispirata versione di Puccini del romanzo di Murger. Venne poi *Zazà* (1900), e queste sono le uniche composizioni di Leoncavallo che ancora

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appaiono in Italia, oltre *Pagliacci*.

Leoncavallo continuò a scrivere fino alla sua morte nel 1919. Le sue più tarde composizioni includono certe curiosità come *Der Roland von Berlin* (1904), composta su espressa commissione del Kaiser Wilhelm II, e *Are You There?*, un'operetta scritta per Londra nel 1913. Leoncavallo era stato a Londra nel 1911 a dirigere *Pagliacci* e *Zazà* all'Hippodrome e vi tornò l'anno seguente a dirigere un nuovo pezzo, *Zingari*, scritto espressamente per quel teatro. Invano tentò di ripetere lo schiacciante successo di *Pagliacci*, e la sua reputazione continuerà a dipendere dalla sopravvivenza della sua opera più famosa.

Qual'è il suo fascino e quale il suo valore? Consideriamo anzitutto alcune opinioni contemporanei. Hermann Klein, un influente critico dell'epoca, scrisse nelle sue memorie della prima esecuzione di *Pagliacci* a Londra nel maggio 1893 (alla quale fu presente il compositore). "La fama della sensazionale opera di Leoncavallo l'aveva preceduta, e il pubblico si aspettava qualcosa di eccezionale. Non fu deluso. Raramente ho visto un pubblico trattenere a tal punto il fiato per l'eccitazione allo svolgimento della trama di un'opera." Continua poi a descrivere e a lodare gli interpreti: Fernando de Lucia (Canio), Melba (Nedda) e Mario Ancona (Tonio),

aggiungendo che “Leoncavallo, modesto e schivo, ha aspettato in silenzio nello sfondo fino alla fine, e poi gli interpreti hanno dovuto costringerlo a presentarsi sulla scena per ricevere l’ovazione che l’attendeva... L’ho trovato uomo di grande cultura e forte intelligenza. È un poeta, oltre che un musicista, e in ambedue le arti rivela la percettività di un profondo pensatore.”

Nel lodare il verismo dell’opera il *Daily Telegraph* stimò che “Ci sembra che ne abbiamo abbastanza, per il momento, di eroi leggendari e di miti fumosi” – una stoccata, naturalmente, a Wagner. “I loro personaggi ci sono troppo distanti; non sono carne della nostra carne e ossa delle nostre ossa. Il nostro tempo vuole Documenti umani, personaggi che nella storia e nel dramma sono nostri consanguinei, non un’esagerata espressione di noi stessi.” Più recentemente, più succintamente, il critico Spike Hughes scrisse che Leoncavallo appagava “Un desiderio da tempo avvertito”. Qui non c’era più il convenzionale eroe romantico, ne venivano riproposte figure delle saghe nordiche, ma personaggi veri, terreni, appassionati, pieni di vita.

Naturalmente, la storia del clown dal cuore infranto, che però deve continuare a recitare fino in fondo la commedia, non è nuova; né è

nuova la trovata di un dramma all’interno del dramma. L’abilità di Leoncavallo sta nell’aver dato a questi espedienti una veste musicale capace di commuovere, immediatamente accessibile ed attraente, melodiosa senza cattivo gusto. Valente librettista, e rispettoso delle unità aristoteliche di tempo e spazio, egli riuscì a creare un canovaccio che è al contempo credibile e agile. La sua caratterizzazione può non penetrare molto in profondità, ma è abbastanza convincente da indurci a credere che queste persone siano reali.

Per la sua partitura Leoncavallo prese giusto quanto gli occorreva dai metodi wagneriani. C’è un uso rudimentale del *Leitmotiv*, e né l’armonia né la strumentazione avrebbero potuto essere come sono se Wagner non fosse mai esistito. Peraltro, il lavoro, nel suo insieme, ha un riconoscibile gusto italiano: i passaggi corali, per esempio, pongono l’azione inequivocabilmente nell’Italia Meridionale, e sia che il compositore appaia spontaneamente e sensualmente melodioso, come nella Serenata di Beppe (Arlecchino), o nella Ballatella di Nedda, oppure frenetico come nel tema di “Ridi, Pagliaccio” (Make it amusing), in “Vesti la giubba” (Put on your costume), la musica manifesta un lirismo transalpino. Questi, ed altri numeri vocali, come l’erotico duetto di Nedda e Silvio, sono pienamente integrati in

una struttura unificata alla maniera dei capolavori del tardo Verdi.

Leoncavallo realizza un brillante *coup de théâtre* con il Prologo, in cui Tonio caccia la testa fuori del sipario e poi esce a dire direttamente agli spettatori che anche gli attori sono uomini e donne come loro, soggetti alla passione, alla gioia, al tormento. Il dramma all’interno del dramma, che abbastanza ricorda quello dell’*Amleto* nella sua pertinenza all’azione principale, è un’altra invenzione d’effetto che ispira al compositore deliziosa musica da commedia dell’arte.

Nell’esecuzione *Pagliacci* si regge interamente sulla scrittura e sull’interpretazione della parte di Canio. In tre toccanti passaggi Leoncavallo rivela un uomo onesto, distrutto dalla gelosia e dal rimorso, legittimo successore dell’Otello verdiano, che richiede un tenore eroico dello stesso stampo. In “Un tal gioco, credetemi” (If he tried it, I promise you) il tono è di minaccia, un avvertimento che Nedda non raccoglie; ci mostra un uomo di carattere fermo, con il quale non si scherza. In “Vesti la giubba” (Put on your costume), dopo che l’infedeltà di Nedda è stata confermata, un’anima grande è torturata dal tormento: nello sfogo del pagliaccio lo sconforto si mischia alla nobiltà d’espressione. Infine, in “No, Pagliaccio non son” (No, we’re not in a play) Canio rimprovera la moglie

infedele, scaricando tutta la sua angoscia nel più eloquente passaggio che Leoncavallo abbia mai scritto, cominciando con “Sperai, tanto il delirio accecato m’aveva” (I hoped, so blind was I, so deluded with passion), e salendo al culmine fino ad un *si* acuto. Se trafigge il cuore – come dovrebbe – trascina le ultime pagine dell’opera dal melodramma alla vera tragedia.

Tonio è anche lui una creazione interessante. Anche qui c’è una dicotomia, questa volta fra il semplicione che fa all’amore con Nedda – Colombina – nella commedia, e la figura patetica e deforme che vede il suo amore crudelmente calpestato da lei nella vita reale. Nedda è una donna scervellata dominata dalle sue voglie elementari e nient’altro. Beppe è il membro spensierato, il paciere della troupe. Silvio è una specie di nullità operistica, anche se la musica accordata da Leoncavallo al bell’amoroso è fra le più gradite da cantare. Tutti i personaggi sostengono la loro parte in un pezzo la cui convinzione drammatica non manca mai di appassionare il pubblico.

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La trama

L’azione si svolge in un paesino della Calabria alla vigilia della Festa dell’Assunzione. L’opera comincia con un prologo nel quale Tonio si presenta alla ribalta e si rivolge al pubblico,

ricodandogli che gli attori sono persone vere e che la storia non andrà presa superficialmente come una drammatica finzione.

Atto I

Gli abitanti del paese stanno festeggiando l'Assunzione e quando vedono che sono arrivati in paese i commedianti si affrettano ad andare a salutarli. Canio, il capocomico, si fa avanti e dice agli astanti che la recita avrà luogo la sera stessa. Tonio cerca di aiutare Nedda, la moglie di Canio, a scendere dal carro sul quale è arrivata, ma Canio lo respinge e lo schiaffeggia. Alcuni paesani commentano che forse sarebbe meglio non lasciare Tonio e Nedda soli insieme. Canio s'infuria e dice che sebbene certe cose possano essere classificate come una commedia in una recita, nella realtà il risultato potrebbe essere ben diverso. Quando si è calmato va in paese con Beppe e i paesani vanno ai vespri.

Rimasta sola Nedda si preoccupa della sfuriata di Canio ma non tarda a rilassarsi al sole pomeridiano. Appare Tonio e quando Nedda ha finito la sua canzone le si avvicina e le dichiara il suo amore, ma Nedda lo deride e lui si fa sempre più irato. Alla fine ella è costretta a difendersi colpendolo al viso con la frusta. Tonio parte giurando vendetta.

Partito Tonio arriva l'amante di Nedda,

Silvio, che l'esorta a fuggire con lui quella sera dopo la recita. Dapprima Nedda non acconsente, ma quando Silvio mette in dubbio il suo amore ella cede. Non visto, Tonio ha ascoltato parte della loro conversazione e va a prendere Canio che arriva guisto in tempo per sentire Nedda rivolgersi a Silvio mentre egli sparisce al di là del muretto. Nedda si rifiuta di svelare a Canio il nome del suo amante. Roso dalla gelosia Canio si veste per la parte che reciterà nella commedia. È sicuro che l'amante della moglie sarà presente quella sera alla recita.

Atto II

Il pubblico (che include Silvio) si è radunato e Nedda va in giro raccogliendo i denari dei biglietti. Comincia la commedia. *Colombina* (Nedda) sta aspettando il suo amante *Arlecchino* (Beppe) giacché il marito, *Pagliaccio* (Canio), passa la notte via da casa. Fuori, *Arlecchino* le fa la serenata. *Taddeo* (Tonio) entra e le dichiara di amarla in segreto, ma lei lo respinge e lui parte mentre entra *Arlecchino*. *Colombina* e *Arlecchino* si siedono a mangiare, ma d'improvviso arriva, inaspettato, *Pagliaccio* e *Arlecchino* scappa dalla finestra. L'addio di *Colombina* ad *Arlecchino* ricorda a Canio quello di Nedda al suo amante segreto poco prima nel pomeriggio. Canio stenta a continuare a recitare la sua parte ed esige da

Nedda/*Colombina* il nome del suo amante. Nedda tenta disperatamente di continuare la commedia, ma Canio s'infuria sempre più. Il pubblico s'innervosisce e Nedda cerca di fuggire, ma Canio riesce ad afferrarla e la pugnala. Silvio accorre a difenderla ma anche lui viene colpito. Canio, impetrato dallo shock, annunzia al pubblico che la commedia è finita.

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Traduzione: Marcella Barzetti

Alan Opie è nato in Cornovaglia e ha studiato alla Guildhall School of Music and Drama e al London Opera Centre. Per molte stagioni ha fatto parte della English National Opera come primo baritono ed ha inoltre cantato per tutte le principali compagnie liriche britanniche comprese la Royal Opera Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera e Opera North. Ingaggi all'estero lo hanno portato ai teatri lirici di Bayreuth, Parigi, Amsterdam, Chicago, Monaco di Baviera, Berlino, Vienna, Brusselle, nonché al Teatro alla Scala e al Metropolitan Opera di New York.

Alan Opie ha vinto un Premio *Grammy* per la sua incisione di *Peter Grimes* (per Chandos) ed ancora per *Die Meistersinger* (con la Chicago Symphony Orchestra diretta da Solti). Gli altri suoi dischi includono *Il barbiere di Siviglia* e

La bohème (per la Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation), *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Gloriana e Troilus and Cressida* (la cui produzione venne sponsorizzata dalla Peter Moores Foundation ed incisa da Chandos).

Nato nel Galles da genitori irlandesi e gallesi **Dennis O'Neill** è fra i principali tenori di rinomanza mondiale ed uno specialista nel repertorio verdiano. E' da anni felicemente impegnato in una lunga collaborazione con la Royal Opera Covent Garden per la quale ha recentemente cantato i ruoli di Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos e Radames (*Aida*).

I suoi ingaggi nel Nord America hanno incluso la Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* e *Rigoletto*), la Chicago Lyric Opera, San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera, Vancouver Opera e concerti con le orchestre sinfoniche di Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal, Ottawa, e per il Festival di Cincinnati. E' di frequente ospite della Bayerische Staatsoper di Monaco di Baviera. Altrove in Europa ha cantato nei teatri lirici di Vienna, Bonn, Colonia, Nizza, Zurigo, Parigi, Oslo, Brusselle e Barcellona.

La sua vasta discografia comprende albums di pezzi solistici, il Requiem di Verdi con Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* con Slatkin,

videoregistrazioni di *Der Rosenkavalier* con Solti, *Die Fledermaus* con Kiri te Kanawa, diretta da Domingo, *Macbeth* con Sinopoli e *Mefistofele* per San Francisco Opera. Per la Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation ha inciso *Tosca*, *La bohème* e un album di pezzi solistici.

Peter Bronder è nato nello Hertfordshire da genitori austro-tedeschi ed ha studiato alla Royal Academy of Music e al National Opera Studio. Dopo una stagione con la Glyndebourne Festival Opera è stato primo tenore con la Welsh National Opera dal 1986 al 1990. Il suo repertorio per questa compagnia ha incluso ruoli principali in *La bohème*, *La traviata*, *I puritani*, *La sonnambula*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte* e *Eugene Onegin*. Ha cantato inoltre con la English National Opera (Almaviva nel *Barbiere di Siviglia*, Vanya in *Kat'a Kabanová*), Opera North (Il Capitano in *Wozzeck*), Scottish Opera (Leicester in *Maria Stuarda*), e la Royal Opera Covent Garden (Cassio in *Otello*, Apparizione della gioventù ne *Die Frau ohne Schatten*).

Rosa Mannion è nata a Liverpool ed ha studiato alla Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama; attualmente studia con Gerald

Martin Moore. Ha debuttato al Royal Opera Covent Garden nel 1993 nella parte di Pamina, ed ha cantato con tutte le principali compagnie britanniche nei ruoli di Constanze (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Cordelia (*Lear* di Aribert Reimann), Sophie (*Werther*), Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Atalanta (*Xerxes*), la Contessa (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Magnolia (*Showboat*), Violetta (*La traviata*), i quattro soprani ne *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* e la parte di protagonista in *Manon*.

Le sue registrazioni discografiche includono *Così fan tutte* con John Eliot Gardiner, *Der Zauberflöte* e *Orlando* con William Christie, la *Serenade to Music* e la Terza Sinfonia di Vaughan Williams e la *Missa solemnis* di Beethoven.

William Dazeley si è laureato presso Jesus College, Cambridge, e ha studiato canto alla Guildhall School of Music and Drama. I premi da lui conseguiti includono il Decca-Kathleen Ferrier Prize, il Richard Tauber Prize e il Walther Gruner International Lieder Prize. Il suo esteso repertorio lirico comprende la parte di protagonista in *Don Giovanni*, in *Owen Wingrave*, in *Billy Budd* e in *Eugene Onegin*, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Pelleas, Mowgli (*Baa Baa Black Sheep* di Michael Berkeley), Danilo (*Die lustige Witwe*) e il Conte e Rodolfo

(*Der ferne Klang*). Ha cantato per la Royal Opera Covent Garden, Opera North, Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Teatro regio di Torino, Opéra de Lyon e New Israeli Opera. I suoi dischi includono *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, *The Rescue of Penelope* di Britten, il *Doktor Faust* di Busoni, e *La bohème* (per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation).

La carriera vocale di Geoffrey Mitchell si distingue per il repertorio eccezionalmente ampio, che va dalla musica antica a quella contemporanea. Tale fatto gli ha fruttato numerosi inviti della BBC ad esibirsi nel ruolo di direttore e, in seguito, un'attività più impegnativa in sintonia con propri cantanti nonché la conseguente formazione del **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Dopo le prime registrazioni su disco il complesso ha potuto stabilire regolari rapporti di lavoro con la compagnia Opera Rara, per la quale ha registrato ben 15 opere. Attualmente gode di crescente reputazione grazie agli ulteriori incarichi ricevuti dalla BBC e dalle case discografiche internazionali.

The Peter Kay Children's Choir (Coro di fanciulli) offre ai giovani cantanti buone prospettive in materia di opera lirica, concerti, annunci pubblicitari televisivi e radio, attività

di beneficenza, festival e produzioni teatrali, in Gran Bretagna, Francia, Belgio, Olanda, Germania, Spagna ed USA. I suoi membri sono stati prescelti tra adolescenti con esperienza di esecuzioni corali, previo invito ed audizione presso l'English National Opera, di cui Peter Kay è consulente, il Finchley Children's Music Group, il New London Children's Choir, The Jennifer Lilleystone Singers, nonché varie scuole di tutta Londra e dell'Inghilterra meridionale.

La **London Philharmonic Orchestra**, costituita nel 1932 da Sir Thomas Beecham, ha attratto nel corso degli anni una successione incomparabile di primi direttori, tra cui Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti e Klaus Tennstedt. Attualmente si alternano periodicamente sul podio il Direttore musicale Franz Welser-Möst ed il Presidente Bernard Haitink.

Dal 1964 questo complesso è l'orchestra sinfonica stabile della Glyndebourne Festival Opera (Compagnia lirica del Festival omonimo) e dal 1992 del Royal Festival Hall. Inoltre, ha effettuato tournée in ogni parte del mondo ed è la prima orchestra britannica ad esibirsi nell'URSS e in Cina. Le sue registrazioni discografiche le hanno meritato numerosi importanti premi.

David Parry ha studiato con Sergiu Celibidache ed ha iniziato la sua carriera come assistente di Sir John Pritchard. Ha fatto il suo debutto con l'English Music Theatre ed è poi diventato direttore stabile della Städtische Bühnen Dortmund e di Opera North. Dal 1983 al 1987 è stato direttore artistico di Opera 80 e dal 1992 Direttore Musicale fondatore del festival di opera contemporanea dell'Almeida Opera.

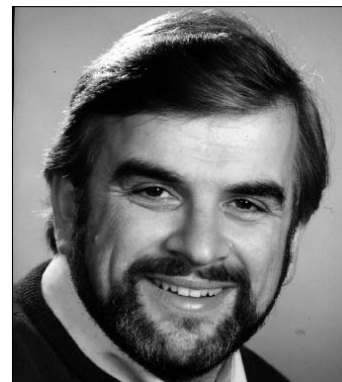
Svolge un'intensa attività sia nel teatro lirico sia in campo sinfonico. Il suo repertorio va da Mozart e l'opera italiana del Ottocento a Janáček e Britten e la musica contemporanea. In Inghilterra ha diretto frequentemente alla English National Opera ed in concerti sinfonici con la Philharmonia Orchestra. Nel 1996 ha debuttato al Glyndebourne Festival Opera con *Così fan tutte*.

Dirige spesso in Spagna nella maggior parte dei teatri lirici e con orchestre sinfoniche. Ha diretto la prima spagnola di *Peter Grimes* a Madrid e nel 1996 il primo allestimento spagnolo della *Rake's Progress*, ha inaugurato

due nuove sale di concerti con la Nona sinfonia di Beethoven ed un nuovo teatro lirico con la *Carmen*. Altre tournées l'hanno portato in Italia, dove ha diretto *Ricciardo e Zoraide* al Festival Rossini di Pesaro, in Francia, Germania, Belgio, Olanda, e Svezia dove ha diretto con grande successo *A Midsummer Night's Dream* di Britten.

Fuori d'Europa David Parry si è esibito al festival internazionale di Hong Kong, con l'UNAM Symphony Orchestra a Città del Messico e in una serie di rappresentazioni della *Carmen* in Giappone. Nel 1996 ha diretto *Káťa Kabanová* in un nuovo allestimento per il festival della Nuova Zelanda.

Ha inciso numerosi dischi per Opera Rara, fra l'altro quello di *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* di Donizetti, che ha vinto il Priz Cecilia in Belgio; per Chandos ha diretto l'acclamato disco della *Tosca*, tre dische di grandi arie operistiche (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague e Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *L'elisir d'amore* e brani del *Rosenkavalier*.



Alan Opie

Robert Carpenter Turner



Peter Bronder



William Dazeley

Prologue

Tonio

[1] Hello... Hello...
Dear ladies and gentlemen, you'll pardon me
for this solo performance.
I am the Prologue.
Our author has decided
we'll all wear masks again
as in the old days,
and since he is reviving
all these ancient customs
he sends me to raise the curtain.
But not to say, as in the past:
'These actors pretend to be sad,
they're weeping,
they're in agony,
but it's not like real life;
don't be upset by them'.
No! No! The author will show you,
here in our theatre,
a slice of life as we live it.
He has a theory that man
and the actor are one,
and that our work is done only for people.
We just show them the truth in life.
He weaves his timeless story,
made up of memories,
made up of passion.
He wept as he wrote it,
real tears of sorrow,
and his sobbing
inspired these brooding melodies.

So then, his tale of love
is just the same as
the love of real people;
it tells of love
and its gloomy outcome,
of the pangs a lover feels,
and that if rage consumes them
men can be cynical.
Dear public, remember
that when we're performing
in our costumes and our make-up,
we have feelings too,
we have all suffered,
for we are flesh and blood,
our hearts beat as yours do,
and that in this world
full of sorrows
like you we all fight for survival!
Now you know what we're here for.
I think you'll find the story will grip you.
Come on, bring up the curtain!

Act I

Scene 1

The entrance of a village, where two roads meet. On the right a travelling theatre. As the curtain rises, sounds of an out-of-tune trumpet and a drum are heard; laughter, shouting, whistling, voices approaching. Enter villagers in holiday attire. Tonio looks up the road on the left. Then, worried by the crowd which stares at him, he lies down in front of the theatre. The time is 3 o'clock. There is bright sunlight.

(The curtain rises.)

Chorus

[2] Hey!
They're back! They're back!
They've all come back...
The leading man...
His pretty wife...
and all their company.
You hear the laughter
he'll tell a story
and make a joke.
And look at that one...
bowing so formally, isn't he funny!
He's pulling faces, isn't he funny!
The lads all cheer with excitement.
They're going mad as they cheer.

Boys

Now then, here is our
favourite comic!

Canio *(from behind)*

Go to the devil, you!

Beppe *(from behind)*

Stop! Stop, you little bastard!

(Boys whistle and shout behind, and then enter running.)

Chorus and Boys

They've got their costumes,
and make-up.
Just look at that one.
They're wonderful.
Aren't they a sight to see.

There's the comic, the leading actor!
Give him a welcome.
You are our favourite star,
our favourite actor!
You're welcome!
Now make us laugh again
with your performance!
Come on, come on,
we're ready to applaud you.
Just look... Just look...
The sad one, he's so funny!
Just look, the sad one,
isn't he funny!
We want to laugh! Come on!

Canio

Thank you! Thank you! And now...

Chorus and Boys

Give us a play tonight!

Canio *(beating the drum to drown the voices of the crowd)*

Listen to me.

Chorus and Boys

Oh, please stop it!
You'll drive us mad!

Canio

Now will you let me speak?

Chorus and Boys

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
He's right.
That's enough of that,
we'll listen and let him speak.

Aria

Canio

- [3] Your most humble servant
has written a new play.
Tonight you may see it
but only if you pay!
You'll like the new tale
with its comedy touches:
you'll see me prevail
with a handsome young duchess!
(*He indicates Nedda.*)
The tragical Tonio
will surely amuse you,
and then he'll confuse you,
there'll be a surprise!
Come here, won't you honour us,
dear friends, with your presence
at half past eleven.

Chorus

So long as you make us laugh,
that's all that we ask for:
at half past eleven.

(*Tonio advances to help Nedda down from the cart,
but Canio, who has already alighted, boxes his ears.*)

Canio (*knocking Tonio aside and helping Nedda
down*)

Let her go!

Chorus (*laughing*)

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!

That surprised you, handsome lover!

Boys (*making fun*)

Handsome lover!

(*Beppe drags off the cart. Tonio chases the boys away.*)

Tonio (*aside, as he goes*)

One day I'll get you, you bastard!

(*Tonio enters the theatre. A group of locals goes up
to Canio.*)

A Local (*egged on by the others*)

Friend, now will you have a drink?

We'll all invite you if you'd like to join us.

Please, say yes.

Canio

Yes, I'd like to.

Beppe (*joining them*)

What a good idea,

I won't be long.

(*Canio passes towards the theatre. Beppe throws his
whip in front of the theatre and goes in to change
his clothes.*)

Canio (*calling*)

Hey, Tonio!

Come and join us.

Tonio (*from within*)

The lights will need some fixing.

Set one up for me.

Another Local (*joking*)

You should be careful.

He only wants to stay here
to be alone with Nedda!

Canio (*smiling, with a frown*)

Eh! Eh! You think so?

Cantabile

Canio

- [4] If he tried it, I promise you
he'd find he had to reckon with me.
I mean it.
Let Tonio and all of you remember:
(*gesturing around him*)
Here is life, there the theatre:
the two are very different.
Yes, the two are very different.
If, in a play, the husband
surprises his fair lady
embraced by some young officer,
he'll preach a funny sermon,
full of outrage, and the officer
will give him such a thrashing!
Then the public applaud him
and you all laugh your heads off!
But if Nedda deceived me
and betrayed me,
I can tell you there'd be tears
instead of laughter,
and the ending would be tragic!
If she tried it, I promise you,
she'd certainly regret it!

Nedda (*aside*)

Has he found out?

Chorus

Oh, come now,
do you mean what you're saying?

Canio

Me? I'm joking. I made it up!

I love my darling Nedda.

(*Canio approaches Nedda and kisses her forehead.*)

Boys and Women (*rushing to the left and looking
off*)

- [5] Do you hear them playing?

Men

It's time for church.
We'd better be going.
Sweet is the sound
of their musical piping,
deep is the note
of the Vesper bell chiming!
Let's be going.
Come on.
We're going to service.

Women

Ah! Come on!
Hear the bells ring,
They call us to service.

Canio

As long as you're there tonight
at half past eleven.

(Canio smiles and nods to those who have invited him, and disappears behind the theatre. The pipers enter with young and old villagers in couples, addressing those who are on the stage.)

Chorus

Come on! Come on!
(Both groups join and form in couples.)
 Ding dong, do you hear the bells?
 Young lovers, come on!
 We go to Vespers, hand in hand.
 As the sunset glows
 so bright and so fair,
 our mothers are watching us,
 so better take care!
 All the world is bright with
 youth and with love:
 but the old eyes are watching us,
 they do not approve!
 Ding dong, the bells ring out their song
 and all the world is bright
 with youth and love.

(The couples go off by road at the back. The chorus goes out and is heard singing in the distance. Canio and Beppe, now in their street clothes, leave with the locals. Nedda is left alone.)

Scene 2

Introduction

Nedda *(musing)*

- [6] The ugly look he gave me!
 I turned away,

so afraid that he might read
 in my eyes
 the secret I'm hiding.
 If ever he discovered,
 he'd beat me like a dog.
 I'm crazy... forget him!
 It's just his jealousy
 that makes me frightened.
 Oh, how enchanting the summer sun is!
 I feel life pulsing through me
 and everything within me
 seems to burn with desires
 I cannot fathom.
(looking to the sky)
 Ah, the swallows are flying.
 Just watch them diving
 and soaring... but for what?
 Who knows? My mother knew,
 she could see in the cards what would happen,
 and she knew what the birds sang;
 now I remember
 the song she sang me.
 Ah! Ah!

Aria

- [7] Swallow, fly away,
 no one can catch you,
 spread out your wings,
 fly up in the ocean of blue.
 But swallow have a care now,
 the sun will scorch you,
 you're soaring, soaring,
 you are lost to view!

Fly up higher and higher,
 fast as an arrow,
 thirsty for the sunlight
 and thirsty for heaven's blue:
 follow your true love,
 your dream of flying together.
 You're soaring, soaring
 you are lost to view.
 Winds may pursue you,
 and storms may blow around you,
 fly little swallow, defying them all.
 Though sheets of lightning
 in a flash surround you,
 you're soaring, soaring,
 you are lost to view.
 Soaring on high
 to find an airy heaven,
 seen in your dreams,
 but forever denied.
 Ever higher you fly,
 drawn by the power
 that rules over your spirit.
 On high, on high, on high.

(During her song, Tonio comes out from behind the theatre and stands listening in rapture. At the end of her song, Nedda turns and sees him.)

Duet

Nedda *(sharply)*

- [8] It's you!
 I thought that you had gone with Canio.

Tonio

Your song gave me such pleasure,
 and just to hear you made me feel happy.

Nedda *(laughing mockingly)*
 Ha! Ha! What an inspiration!

Tonio

Don't mock me, Nedda!

Nedda

Why? Don't you deserve it?

Tonio

I'm not tall and handsome,
 I know you despise me,
 I know I arouse
 only hatred in you.
 And yet I am human,
 I long to be happy,
 I have a heart too.
 But when you ignore me
 and don't even see me,
 I try to keep quiet
 and not show my grief:
 believe what I tell you,
 to me you're an angel,
 I've fallen in love!
(approaching her)
 Allow me, I beg of you, to tell you...

Nedda *(breaking in and bursting into laughter)*

You love me! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
(elegantly, taking up a fan)
 There's time for your words of love.

This evening I'll hear them.

Tonio
Nedda!

Nedda
This evening you'll tell
me the story on stage,
on stage and in costume.

Tonio
Don't mock me, Nedda!

Nedda (*bowing theatrically*)
There's time then! You'll tell me
the story, on stage.
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Tonio
Believe what I tell you,
to me you're an angel!
Don't mock me, no!
Don't mock me!

Nedda
Don't bother.
Don't bother, you're wasting your time.

Tonio
To me you're an angel,
I've fallen in love!
Nedda!
No, I'm here and I must tell you now.
You've got to stay and listen!
I love you, I'm going mad for you.
I've got to have you, I've got to!

Nedda (*with studied insolence*)
Oh, really master Tonio.
Your hunchback isn't the trouble.
Or should I give you a thrashing
for you to satisfy your lust?

Tonio
You're laughing, you despise me!
Now, as God is my witness, Nedda!
I swear that you'll be sorry!

Nedda
I'll show you.
Wait till Canio hears the story!

Tonio (*moving towards her*)
But not before I kiss you!

Nedda (*drawing back*)
Watch out!

Tonio (*rushing to catch her*)
I'll take you if I have to!

Nedda (*picking up the whip, and striking Tonio in the face*)
Don't you dare touch me!

Tonio (*screaming and drawing back*)
Now I take an oath
by all that's holy,
Nedda, I'll get you
and I'll make you suffer!

Nedda (*motionless, watching him as he goes off*)
Viper! Go!
I see now what you're made of!

Oh, how I loathe you,
the sight of you!
You're twisted in your mind and body,
filthy!

Scene 3

Duet

Silvio (*appearing on the wall*)
[9] Nedda!

Nedda
Silvio!
Here so early?
This is madness.

Silvio (*laughing*)
So what! Don't worry,
I'm certain no one saw me.
Canio and Beppe
are drinking with their cronies,
I saw them going, I promise!
Don't be frightened.
I was longing to see you,
I just had to.

Nedda
We must be careful;
and Tonio might have seen you.

Silvio (*laughing*)
Oh, scared of Tonio?

Nedda
That Tonio is a monster!
He loves me and just now he tried to...

to have his way,
and to make love;
he tried to kiss me.
He was like some wild beast!

Silvio
My God!

Nedda
Oh, he'll regret it.
I tamed him nicely,
I gave him a beating!

Silvio (*approaching Nedda sadly and tenderly*)
[10] Why do you go on
with this tormented life?
Nedda, Nedda!
(*He takes her hand and leads her downstage.*)
You will decide my fate.
Nedda! Nedda, don't leave me!
Tonight the show will end,
you will have gone tomorrow.
Nedda! Nedda!
When you have gone away
and left me lonely, ah then,
what shall I do?
My life will be over!

Nedda (*moved*)
Silvio!

Silvio
Nedda, Nedda, I beg of you,
You don't love Canio.
You have never loved him,

you told me how you hated
your cheap and false way of life in the theatre.
If you love me so much,
if you mean all you say,
come away with me now.
Nedda, be mine!

Nedda

¹¹ I must be strong,
do not tempt me, do not destroy me!
Silvio, Silvio,
no, no, you are dreaming, it can't be!
Trust and believe what I say,
I live for you alone!
Don't spoil this love of ours,
don't wreck the joy we've known!
I must be strong, I must be strong,
I love you so!
I must be strong, I love you so!
And yet, who knows?
Sometimes I like this sort of life.
Fate decides what's to be,
our words can't help at all!
But still my love is true,
I cannot tear it from me.
It lives here in my heart
this sweet love you awakened!

Silvio

Ah! Nedda, my love!
Nedda, don't leave me.
But what am I to do,
How can I live without you?
Don't go! Nedda!

My love, my love.
(*Tonio appears from the back.*)
Ah, stay here with me, my love!
No, you don't love me!

Tonio (*choking*)

Ah! I've got you, you vermin!
(*He hurries off by the path, threatening.*)

Nedda

What!

Silvio

You don't love me!

Nedda

Ah, yes, I love you!

Silvio

Then stay here, do not leave me!

¹² How can you tell me
you ever loved me,
how can you go
and leave me to die?
Why did you kiss
and why did you hold me,
were all your kisses
of love a lie?

Have you forgotten
long hours of loving?
I can't forget them,
and long for more.
I want to hold you,
I want to kiss you.
I want to love you for evermore!

Nedda (*overcome and yielding*)

Never forget
and never reproach me.
Can you not see in my eyes
how much I love you?
Let me stay close
beside you, your arms around me,
one sweet lifetime of love
we two together!
You are my master,
I am yours forever.
Take me and hold me,
I'll follow and obey you,
never to part.

Silvio

Never to part.

Nedda and Silvio

How I've longed for this moment of passion.

Nedda

Take me away with you, we cannot part now.

Silvio

I'll take you away with me, we cannot part now.
You'll come?

Nedda

Yes, kiss me!

Nedda and Silvio

Yes, I'll love you for ever!

Scene 4 and Finale

(*Tonio and Canio appear.*)

Tonio (*holding Canio back*)

¹³ Be very careful,
and then we can surprise them.

Silvio (*half over the wall and holding on to it*)

At dead of night
I'll hide over there!
(*leaping over*)
Don't let them see you.
Come down and you will find me.
(*He disappears.*)

Nedda (*to Silvio*)

Yes, tonight
and forever I'll be yours.

Canio

(*From where he is standing he overhears the words,
and shouts.*)

Ha!

Nedda (*turning at the shout and seeing Canio, calls
towards the wall*)

Hurry!

(*Canio rushes to the wall, but Nedda bars his way.
There is a short struggle. He pushes her aside and
jumps over the wall.*)

Nedda (*listening anxiously*)

Dear God,
protect him now!

Canio (*offstage*)

Coward, I'll get you!

Tonio (*laughing comically*)

Ha! Ha! Ha!

Nedda (*turning to Tonio*)

Well done, my clever Tonio!

Tonio

Part of the service!

Nedda

You like to stir up trouble.

Tonio (*bowing*)

I can do even better,
don't you worry.

Nedda

You disgust me. I hate you!

Tonio

Oh, don't you know yet,
that's what I like!
(*Canio re-enters, from over the wall, out of breath
and mopping his forehead.*)

Canio (*with suppressed anger*)

What a fool they've made me!
Lost him! It's clear
that he knows his way around.
(*furiously to Nedda*)
I shall find him:
the lover who just left you.

Tell me his name.

Nedda (*turning*)

Who?

Canio

You! God is my witness.
And I'll tell you the reason
(*drawing a dagger from his belt*)
why I haven't
cut your throat.
It's because, before I plant it
in your treacherous bosom,
you shameless harlot,
I'll make you tell me
who is your lover, tell me!

Nedda

Your threats are useless.
I swear I'll tell you nothing.

Canio (*shouting*)

Who is it? Who is it?
Spit it out, you wretched woman!

Nedda

No! I would rather die!
(*Beppe appears from the left.*)

Canio (*rushing on Nedda, but Beppe holds him
back, snatches the knife from him and throws it
away*)

Damn you, I'll kill you!

Beppe

Oh, what is this?
Let her be, I tell you.
It's time for the performance.
Any moment now they'll all be coming.
Now, listen, just control yourself!

Canio (*struggling*)

Don't try to stop me!
Who is he? Who is he?

Beppe

Tonio,
help me to hold him.

Canio

Who is he?

(*Tonio, seizing him by the arm, leads him down
left.*)

Beppe

Come on now, you mustn't shout so loud!
Here comes the public.
(*to Nedda*)
And Nedda, get away from him,
it's time to go and dress.
(*pushing her towards the theatre*)
We all know
Canio has a temper.
It'll pass.

Canio (*holding his head in his hands*)
I hate her, I hate her!

(*Beppe goes with Nedda into the theatre.*)

Tonio (*softly to Canio, pushing him down to the
front*)

Calm down a bit.
Stop shouting.
Pretend it's all a joke.
Her lover will come back,
then we will find a way!
I will observe her.
You do the show as usual.
Who knows, maybe he'll come
to see her act tonight,
and he'll betray himself.
Calm down.
You must deceive them both
to get your way.

(*Beppe comes from the theatre. Tonio goes up.*)

Beppe

We're waiting, Canio,
Your costume's here,
get ready.
(*to Tonio*)
And you, give us a drum roll, Tonio.
(*Both go off behind the theatre.*)

Introduction

Canio

^[14] Go on stage,
and my life broken in pieces.
I won't know what I'm saying,
how can I do it?
But no, you have to. Force yourself!

Well!
(angrily)
 Call yourself a man!
(mocking)
 Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!
 You're just an actor!
(taking his head in his hands in despair)

Aria

Canio

- ¹⁵ Put on your costume
 and your wig and your make-up.
 They pay their money,
 and you must make them laugh.
 If, in the play,
 your lady takes a lover,
 make it amusing,
 be sure to raise a laugh.
 You turn to laughter your pain
 and betrayal,
 you tell a story,
 pull faces, play the part.
 Ah! Make it amusing,
 though your life has been shattered.
 Who wants to know
 that grief has poisoned your heart?

*(He moves slowly towards the theatre weeping,
 pushes the curtain roughly as if not wishing to enter,
 then begins to weep again. He takes his head in his
 hands and hides his face, takes a few steps towards
 the curtain. He enters and disappears.)*

¹⁶ **Intermezzo**

Act II

*(Beppe comes from behind, blowing a trumpet;
 Tonio follows, beating the big drum, and goes to
 take up his position on the left of the theatre.
 Meanwhile, people come from all directions to the
 play and Beppe places the benches for the women.)*

Scene 1

Women and Men *(from behind the scene)*

- ¹⁷ Oh! Oh!
 Quickly! Hurry!
 Let's get a move on!
 Hurry along with you,
 come on, look lively!
 Let's get a move on,
 don't waste time!

Tonio *(beating a drum)*

Come on, be quick,
 we're nearly starting!

Chorus

Hurry along with you,
 or they'll have started!
 Don't be impatient!
 Will you stop pushing me.
 If you don't move now
 we'll miss the start!

Tonio

We're nearly ready!
 We're nearly ready, quickly, quickly!

Men

Just look around, those pretty girls
 are so attractive,
 aren't they attractive!
 Oh, Lord, what a crush!
 Come here and sit by me
 you lovely creature!
 I'll tell you the story!

Women

I hate the way they push!

Tonio

Get to your places!
 Come on!
 Hurry along! Sit down!

Women and Men

Down in the front row!
 Down in the front row!
 Hurry along with you
 or they'll have started.
 Aren't there a few more seats
 down in the front there?
 Well, here we are.
 Come, we are ready now,
 we want some action.
 Why do we have to wait?
 We want some action!
 Give us the play!

Tonio

Come on, be quick,
 we're nearly starting.

*(Tonio exits behind the theatre, carrying away the
 drum. Beppe goes to settle the women who are
 quarrelling about their seats.)*

Women

Will you stop pushing me!
 I wasn't pushing you!
 Stop pushing! You're crazy!
 Stop! Who?
 Stop! Oh Beppe, lend a hand.
 I'm so exhausted.

Men

Sit down along the side here!
 See, they have come to blows!
 Will no one stop them?
 Sit down and stop that dreadful noise.
 Stop all that shouting there!

*(Silvio passes on the right seeing Nedda going round
 with a plate for the money, and approaches her.)*

Beppe

Sit down and
 don't make such a noise!

Silvio

Nedda!

Nedda

Be careful!
 Don't let him see you!

Silvio

I shall be waiting
 after the show.

Women and Men

Let's start, we're ready now.
Why are we waiting? Let's start!
We want to see some action!
Let's start! Let's start!

Beppe

Stop shouting! Damn it all!
Some haven't paid yet!
Give it to Nedda!

Women and Men

I've paid! I've paid!
It's time to start! Come on,
why are we waiting?
It's time to start! Come on,
ring up the curtain!
We'll make a scene
yes, yes, we'll all start yelling!
You know quite well
it's gone half past eleven.
(A bell is heard being rung.)
Ah! They must be starting!
No shouting, no yelling, they're starting!
We're ready! Hoorah! Hoorah! Hoorah!

The Play

Scene 2

The curtain of the theatre is drawn aside. The scene, roughly painted, represents a little room with two side doors, and a practicable window at the back. There is a table and two common chairs on the right. Nedda is dressed as Columbina.

(As the curtain opens, Columbina is seated near the table; from time to time she looks anxiously to the door on the right. She rises, goes to look out of the window, and then returns to the front, walking about restlessly.)

Columbina

[18] Pagliaccio, that's my husband,
dines out this evening, won't be home till late.
(Columbina sits down again impatiently. She gets up and comes downstage.)
That idiotic servant,
old Taddeo,
why on earth is he so late?
(Columbina, hearing the sound of a guitar offstage, rushes to the window with a cry of joy, but does not open it.)

Harlequin (offstage)

Columbina, faithful
Arlecchino's near.
Can you not hear?
With love he's sighing,
maybe dying
if you don't appear!
Won't you let me kiss
your pretty lips, my dear?
Do not delay.
How I adore you,
here I implore you:
one loving kiss
and then I'll go away.

Serenade

[19] Oh, Columbina, let our
love affair begin.
Poor Arlecchin...
With love I'm sighing,
maybe I'm dying.
Ah, won't you let me in!

Columbina (coming downstage)

I'll give the signal
in a moment, he's waiting, he'll see it
and then we'll be together.

(Columbina sits again at the table. Tonio, dressed as Taddeo, peeps through the door and watches Nedda.)

Taddeo (in mock tragic style)

[20] She's waiting.
(lifting his hands and the basket upwards)
She is a goddess!
(The audience laughs.)
I long to woo her,
I long to tell her
of my love.
If she spurns me I'll compel her!
Gone is the husband,
and there's my angel.
Why won't she see me?
There's no one by to catch us.
Oh, turn and kiss me. Ah.

Columbina (turning without rising)

You're there, numbskull!

Taddeo (without moving)

I am here, yes!

Columbina

Has Pagliaccio come home yet?

Taddeo

Oh, no, not yet!

Columbina (aside)

I'd really like to kick him!
(to Taddeo)
Now, did you buy a chicken?

Taddeo

Here you are, goddess from heaven!
(He kneels down and offers his basket.)
My lady, I and the chicken
implore your favour.
Fate has chosen this moment
for me to tell you
of the love in my heart.
See, I am your slave,
my queen.

Columbina (interrupting)

I hope you didn't spend much money?

(Columbina snatches the basket from him, places it on the table, then goes to the window, opens it and makes a signal.)

Taddeo

Nothing to speak of.
Oh, my queen, how I love you!

Columbina (*close to the table*)

Leave it here and be off!

Taddeo

I know you're faithful,
you'd not deceive your husband,
(*sneering*)

so honest, you'd not deceive him!
(*Meanwhile Harlequin jumps in through the window, puts down a bottle and goes cautiously behind Taddeo.*)

And, though you'd spurn me,
spurn me so harshly,
You'll never force me to forget you.
No, never!

Harlequin (*taking Taddeo by the ear and kicking him*)

Off with you quickly!

Taddeo

Heavens! A lover!
I do as you command, sir,
and give my blessing.
(*retreating to the door*)
Yes, I'll keep a lookout.

(*Taddeo exits and the spectators laugh and applaud. Columbina and Harlequin watch each other with exaggerated looks of love.*)

Columbina

²¹ Arlecchin!

Harlequin

Columbina! You must surrender
to my undying love!

Columbina

Oh, I'm so hungry!

(*Columbina takes knives, forks and spoons for two, and places the chicken on the table, while Harlequin takes up the bottle which he left on the ground.*)

You see, my love,
this tasty dish:
I hope it will excite you.

Harlequin

Why yes, my love,
and here's a glass
of wine that will delight you!

Columbina and Harlequin

My appetite is keener
when I take wine at dinner!

Harlequin

My greedy Columbina!

Columbina

Oh, pour me out another!

Harlequin

Columbina!
(*He takes a little phial which he has concealed about him.*)

Here's a potion that I've prepared;
Give it to Pagliaccio:

It will make him drowsy,
and then we'll run away!

Columbina

Oh, lovely!

Taddeo (*He enters with mock alarm.*)

I warn you,
Pagliaccio is here. He's in a passion.
He's got a weapon!
He will kill you.
I'll hide behind this curtain!
(*Spectators laugh.*)

Columbina (*to Harlequin*)

Hurry!

Harlequin (*as he leaps out of the window*)

²² Pour the potion in his glass at midnight!
(*Canio, dressed as Pagliaccio, enters.*)

Columbina (*at the window*)

Yes, tonight...
And forever I shall be yours.

Canio (*aside*)

Just the same promise
that she gave to her lover!
(*advancing to play his part*)
God help me!
(*aloud*)
I heard another voice.

Nedda

What nonsense!
You've been drinking?

Canio (*restraining himself with difficulty*)
Been drinking?

Yes! (*eyeing her with meaning*) All evening!

Nedda

You're home so early.

Canio (*pointedly*)

Too early?
You're trembling,
my little darling.
(*still trying to restrain himself*)
Ah! What about the table:
there are places for two.

Nedda

I sat there
with Taddeo.
In fright he hid behind the curtain.
(*going towards the door*)
Come out! Tell him!

Tonio (*from behind, pretending to be afraid*)

Believe her, sir. She is faithful!
She'd never tell a lie,
she'd not deceive you.
(*The audience laughs loudly.*)

Canio (*fiercely, to the audience*)

Stop your laughing!
(*softly, to Nedda*)
I mean it! I have the right,
the right of every husband.
What is his name?

Nedda

But who?

Canio

Tell me now. I want to know his name,
the handsome lover

who embraced and kissed you.
Oh, I could kill you!

Nedda (*joking*)
Pagliaccio! Pagliaccio!

Aria

Canio
[23] No, we're not in a play!
You see how pale I am,
well that's from horror
and shame that you betrayed me.
See, the actor is human,
you know his broken heart
is bleeding, he must have vengeance!
No! We're not in a play!
Have you forgotten me,
how I nursed you
to health and fed and clothed you.
You were helpless and starving.
I even married you
and gave you love
like some stupid old madman!
(*He falls overwhelmed on the chair by the table.*)

Groups of Women
Great acting, he has made me cry.
You'd think he really meant it.

Groups of Men
Will you shut up!
Stop talking there!

Silvio (*aside*)
If I could only help her!

Canio
I hoped, so blind was I,
so deluded with passion,
that you'd be kind and pity me.
I gave everything up for you
to keep you happy.
I believed like a blind man
that you were true to me.
But no, you are possessed
in heart and soul by evil:
you don't care about me,
you have no sense of shame!
You deserve no remorse,
you worthless little peasant.
I long to wipe your
loathsome presence from the world.

Women and Men
Bravo!

Nedda (*calm and serious*)
Enough! You've decided
I'm not worth keeping,
so kick me out this minute.

Canio (*laughing*)
Ha! Ha! That's just exactly
what you'd like
so you could turn
to see your lover.
You'd like that.
No! By God. You're going nowhere
until I know your lover.
What's his name?

Nedda (*trying to resume the play, with a forced smile*)

You really mean to frighten me,
I'd never have believed it!
We're only playing comedy.
(*going towards the door*)
Don't be so fierce and tragic.
It's true I had a caller.
I offered him some supper.
His name... It was only,
that boy Arlecchino!

(*laughter in the crowd, immediately checked at Canio's attitude*)

Canio (*violently*)
Ah, you're still playing.
You haven't understood me.
Give me your answer.
Who is he? Who is your lover? Who is he?

Nedda (*bursting out*)
No! No! You can kill me!
You want to, I can see it.
Why don't you do it?
I'm not afraid to die!

Men and Women
This isn't acting.
Sounds like they mean it.
Will you shut up!
Can it be true, they mean it?

Silvio
If only I could help...
Oh, my God, what will happen!

Beppe
Go in and stop them, Tonio.

Tonio (*holding Beppe*)
Let them finish!

Beppe
I am frightened.

Nedda
You shout and threaten.
Nothing can stop my loving.

Canio
Ah!

Nedda
I will not say!
No! I swear it, I will die first!

Canio
Who is he?

Nedda (*defiantly*)
No!

Canio
Who is he?

The Crowd
Ah!

Silvio (*drawing his dagger*)
Look at the knife he has!
He'll kill her!

(Some of the women run away, and some of the men hold Silvio, not understanding his excitement. Nedda tries to escape towards the spectators, but Canio seizes her, and strikes her with his knife.)

Chorus *(all rising to their feet, general confusion)*
Dear God!

Canio *(to Nedda)*
Take that, you slut!

Chorus and Beppe
Stop him! Oh, help!

Canio
And as your blood is choking you,
say his name.

Nedda *(shrieking)*
Ah!
(Nedda falls, making a gurgling sound in her throat.)
Where are you *(with a last effort)*, Silvio?

Silvio
Nedda!

(Canio turns at the voice of Silvio, rushes toward him, and stabs him in the heart.)

Canio
Ah! It's you! You're welcome!
(Silvio falls as if struck by lightning.)

Men
Arrest him!

Women
Heaven forgive them!

(The crowd tries to disarm Canio.)

Tonio *(to the spectators)*
Our comedy is over!

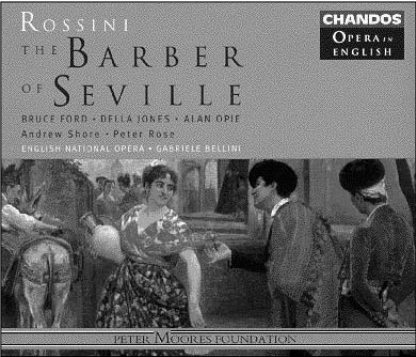
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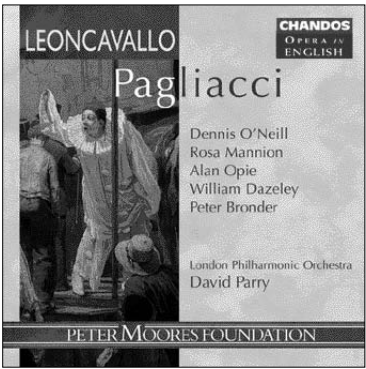


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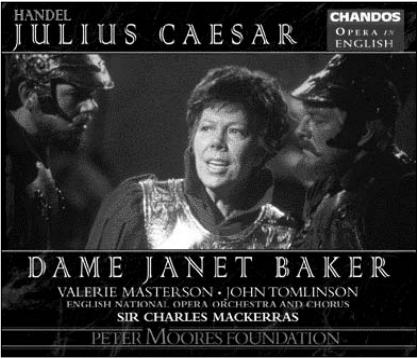


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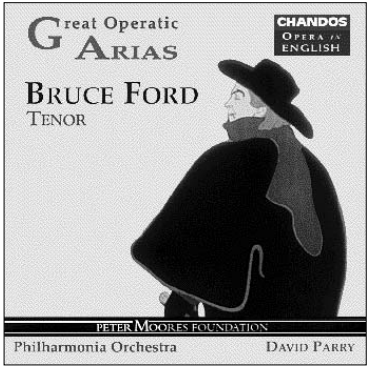


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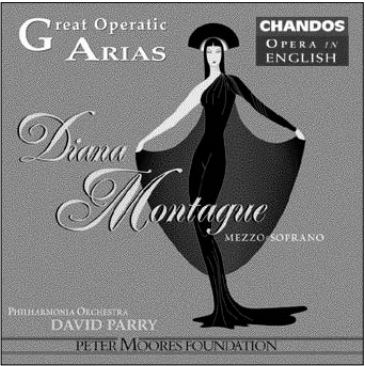


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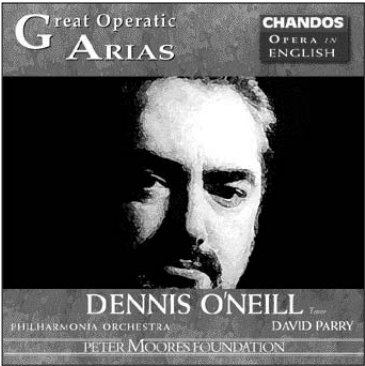
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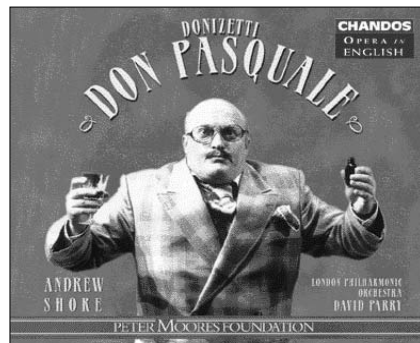


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AKG

Pietro Mascagni, c. 1890

Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945)

Cavalleria rusticana (Country Manners)

Melodrama in one act

Libretto by G. Targioni-Tozzetti and G. Menasci

English translation by Edmund Tracey

Turiddu, a village lad Dennis O'Neill *tenor*
Santuzza, a village girl Nelly Miricioiu *soprano*
Alfio, the village carter Phillip Joll *baritone*
Lola, Alfio's wife Diana Montague *mezzo-soprano*
Lucia, Turiddu's mother Elizabeth Bainbridge *contralto*

Geoffrey Mitchell Choir
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Brad Cohen assistant conductor
David Parry

	Time	Page
[1] Prelude	2:40	40
Siciliana		
[2] 'Oh, Lola, with your skin white as the lily'	1:56	40
<i>Turiddu</i>		
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[4] 'Ah! Ah!'	2:46	40
Chorus		
[5] 'Spring has returned'	5:29	40
<i>Chorus</i>		
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[6] 'Tell me, mamma Lucia'	5:06	40
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[8] 'Good for you, Mister Alfio'	0:33	42
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Scene		
[11] 'What do you want, Santuzza?'	3:52	43
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[12] 'Sweet flow'rs I bring you'	3:55	44
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	Time	Page
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[14] 'Oh! So my prayer has been answered!'	3:58	47
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[15] 'I'd like to thank you'	2:05	48
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[18] 'Neighbours, with a glass I meet you'	2:33	48
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[19] 'All the blessings of Easter!'	2:25	49
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[20] 'Alfio, listen'	2:45	50
<i>Turiddu, Alfio, Lucia</i>		
[21] 'The wine is making me talk nonsense'	6:00	50
<i>Turiddu, Lucia, Santuzza, Lola, Chorus</i>		
TT 79:31		

Pietro Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana*

The launch of *Cavalleria rusticana* at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome on 17 May 1890 was perhaps the most successful premiere in the history of opera. Overnight the twenty-six-year-old Pietro Mascagni was catapulted from provincial obscurity to dizzying fame, to be hailed as the heir of Verdi. *Verismo* was defined.

Fifty-five years later, just after the end of World War Two, Mascagni died in the Roman hotel which had been his home for the previous eighteen years, a bitter old relic contaminated by his association with the fascist regime of Mussolini. (The Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, as the Costanzi is now known, still has an inscription to Benito Mussolini Duce high above its proscenium.) In the post-war era his other operas, by which he set such store, were disregarded and even *Cavalleria rusticana* was patronised as the cruder makeweight for Leoncavallo's more sophisticated *Pagliacci*.

Today Mascagni is coming back into fashion with serious musicians. The Rome Opera inaugurated its 1996 season with a superb new production of his *Iris* (an

evocation of Japan six years ahead of *Madama Butterfly*). The English conductor Mark Elder told me how much he admired the wholly neglected *Parisina* which had flopped at La Scala in 1913. The Italian Carlo Rizzi, when conducting the double bill of *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, told me he thought the operas very different and unrelated but that he preferred the former.

The praise which Mascagni particularly valued was from the artists who took part in the premiere and from the orchestra and chorus who, on leaving rehearsals in the theatre, said to their friends, 'You're going to hear something really astounding!' *Cavalleria rusticana* was one of three operas which won the competition for one-act operas sponsored by the publisher Edoardo Sonzogno. Curiously Sonzogno's impression, given after conferring with the judges but before seeing the opera in the theatre, was: 'You are a good musician, but I fear that the opera is not theatrical'. One of the judges Giovanni Sgambati, professor at Santa Cecilia, was more perceptive: 'Discussion is useless; this is music which pleases the public.'

Despite his inexperience and his superior allegiance to this first-born but still unperformed *Guglielmo Ratcliff* (which he persisted in preferring to *Cavalleria*), Mascagni was confident of the theatricality of his subject:

I composed the opera in a little more than fifty days, but the choice of subject is something much more long standing. I was present some years ago at a performance of Verga's drama and carried away from it a strong and unforgettable emotion. There was such strong passion in those scenes that I remained deeply struck by it. From that time on I felt that if a composer knew his business he would create a really theatrical work.

Giovanni Verga's drama derived from his short story, which even today captures in seven or eight pages the essence of Sicily. Violence lurks beneath the languor. Cheeky humour cloaks sexual passion. Speech is both direct and oblique, for some things just do not need saying in this closed society. Read it in D.H. Lawrence's wonderfully earthy translation. Here is the final page:

They were both good fighters with the knife. Alfio struck the first thrust, and Turiddu was quick enough to catch it on his arm. When he gave it back, he gave a good one, aiming at the groin.

'Ah! Turiddu. Do you really mean to kill me?'
'Yes, I told you! Since I saw my old woman with the fowls, I can't get her out of my eyes.'

'Then open your eyes, then!' Alfio shouted at him; 'I'll give you more than you asked for.'

And as the carter stood on guard, doubled up so as to keep his left hand over his wound, which hurt him, his elbow almost brushing the ground, suddenly he seized a handful of dust and threw it full in his enemy's eyes.

'Ah!' screamed Turiddu, blinded. 'I'm done!'

He tried to save himself by jumping desperately backwards, but Alfio caught him up with another stab in the stomach, and a third in the throat.

'— and there! That's for the house which you adorned for me! And now your mother can mind her fowls —'

Turiddu reeled about for a moment or two here and there among the cactuses, then fell like a stone. The blood gurgled frothing from his throat, he couldn't even gasp: Oh, Mother!

Mascagni began his composition at the end. While waiting for his reluctant librettist to deliver a text:

I thought about the finale more than anything else. I heard that 'Hanno ammazzato compare Turiddu' [They've done it — they've killed Turiddu!] ringing in my ears, but didn't see the possibility of it coming off if I couldn't find the

phrase and concluding orchestral harmonies which would make a strong effect. I don't know how it happened, but the finale dropped all of a sudden into my mind, in a flash, one morning on the main street of Camosa while I was going to give a music lesson. And they were those same seventh chords which I have scrupulously kept in the manuscript. Thus I began my opera at the end.

It was a bold stroke to end the opera with a spoken (or screamed) line. More dangerous still to interrupt the evocative prelude to the opera with a song sung behind the curtain, so much so that Mascagni omitted it from his submission to the Sonzogno judges and only revealed his daring at the oral examination. Turiddu's *siciliana*, sung in Sicilian dialect, immediately conveys both the locality and the illicit affair which is the mainspring of the action.

The other song, Lola's *stornello*, which interrupts the big central duet for Santuzza and Turiddu, is not Sicilian at all but an imitation of an old Tuscan *stornello*. The excuse is that Turiddu, returned from soldiering on the Italian continent, showed off by teaching this Tuscan song to his girlfriend.

It is not just the set pieces which distinguish *Cavalleria rusticana*. Listen to how the Easter Hymn is set up by the terse exchange between

Alfio and Mother Lucia about Turiddu's supposed journey to Francofonte to buy wine. And then to the way in which the *brindisi*, when the wine is drunk, is followed by the short scene in which Alfio deliberately spills the wine as prelude to the challenge, the dignified menace of which is worthy of Verga.

Mascagni hated his operas to be labelled *verismo* and always denied that *Cavalleria rusticana* was. But he acknowledged that, by contrast with the mythical and classical subjects of his competitors, the secret of his opera's success was that 'there is much humanity and that the passion is expressed with an impetus and fire which are the Sicilian temperament exactly'.

Truth, and melody. Mascagni treasured a visit to Verdi at Sant'Agata where the old composer was overheard reading *Cavalleria rusticana* at the piano. The following morning Verdi said, 'So it is not true that the tradition of Italian melody is finished'.

As I write this, I am listening to two compact disc compilations of veristic opera sent to me by the Casa Sonzogno. *Le grandi voci* of the past bring these melodies vividly to life today. Most of all Mascagni loved the tenor voice. As I listen to Caruso and Gigli, Pertile and Taccani, tears spring from my eyes. If I had been present at the Costanzi on that

fateful evening in 1890, I think that my heart would have burst.

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Synopsis

Turiddu, a Sicilian village lad, has promised himself to Lola, but is called up to serve a year in the army. When he returns Lola has married Alfio. He turns to Santuzza and they become lovers, but tiring of this Turiddu turns back to Lola and is pursuing a secret affair with her.

The opera opens with an orchestral prelude. Turiddu is heard singing a serenade to Lola in the distance. It is Easter Sunday and the villagers are moving through the square. Santuzza asks for news of Turiddu from his mother, Lucia, who says that he went over to Francofonte to buy wine, but Santuzza replies that he was seen in the village the previous night.

Alfio the carter sings of his pleasure in his itinerant life and asks Lucia, who keeps the local wine shop, for some wine, but Lucia says that Turiddu has gone to collect it from Francofonte. Alfio knows he has not, having himself seen him earlier that morning near his own cottage. Lucia wants to question him further, but Santuzza stops her, and Alfio leaves

as the villagers gather in front of the church. Santuzza leads them in the Easter Hymn.

As the villagers go into church Santuzza explains to Lucia why she stopped her speaking. Turiddu has betrayed his love to her and gone back to his old love Lola, although Lola is married to Alfio. Lucia pities Santuzza and goes into church to pray for her while Santuzza waits and confronts Turiddu, telling him that she knows where he spent the night. She also tells him that she still loves him and will forgive him. Turiddu denies that he loves Lola and reproaches Santuzza for her jealousy. Their argument is interrupted when Lola is heard singing as she comes through the square on her way to church. As she goes in the argument continues. Santuzza begs Turiddu to stay, but he flings her to the ground and follows Lola into church.

No sooner has Turiddu gone than Alfio appears, looking for Lola. In her anger Santuzza explains that Lola has betrayed him with Turiddu. Alfio swears to have revenge.

A musical intermezzo reflects the blessing of Easter Day.

The congregation comes out of the church. Turiddu is in high spirits because he is with Lola, and stops to have a drink at his mother's wine shop, inviting the villagers to join him. Alfio approaches and Turiddu offers him a

drink which he refuses. The women leave, taking Lola with them and Alfio challenges Turiddu to fight him. They arrange to meet beyond the vegetable gardens.

Turiddu begs his mother for her blessing and asks her to look after Santuzza if he should not return. He leaves and Santuzza arrives to comfort Lucia. There is a scream from the distance – there has been a fight and Turiddu has been killed.

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Born in Wales of Irish and Welsh parents, **Dennis O'Neill** is one of the world's leading tenors and a specialist in the works of Verdi. He has enjoyed a long association with the Royal Opera Covent Garden, where his recent roles have included Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos and Radames (*Aida*).

North American engagements have included The Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* and *Rigoletto*), Chicago Lyric Opera, San Francisco, San Diego, Vancouver Opera and concerts with the Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal and Ottawa Symphony Orchestras, and for the Cincinnati Festival. He is a frequent guest at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich. Elsewhere

in Europe he has appeared at the opera houses of Vienna, Bonn, Cologne, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Brussels and Barcelona.

His many recordings include solo albums, Verdi's Requiem with Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* with Slatkin, videos of *Der Rosenkavalier* with Solti, *Die Fledermaus* with Kiri te Kanawa conducted by Domingo, *Macbeth* with Sinopoli and *Mefistofele* for San Francisco Opera. For Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation he has recorded *Tosca*, *La bohème* and a solo album.

Soprano **Nelly Miricioiu** is acclaimed as one of the most exciting and versatile artists of our day, with a wide repertoire that includes the heroines of Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi and Puccini. In 1986 she made her Vienna State Opera debut in *Manon Lescaut* which was followed by *La bohème*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La traviata* and *Maria Stuarda*. She has also appeared at English National Opera (*La traviata*), Teatro alla Scala, Milan, the Opéra-Comique and Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, and at the opera houses of Madrid, Berlin (Deutsche Oper), Brussels (Théâtre royal de la Monnaie), Toulouse, Munich, Monte Carlo, Stuttgart and Copenhagen. Internationally Nelly Miricioiu has appeared at The Metropolitan Opera, New York, San Francisco

Opera, Washington Opera, and the Opera Company of Philadelphia. Recordings include, for Opera Rara, Mercadante's *Orazi e Curiazi*, Donizetti's *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* and *Maria di Rudenz*, Rossini's *Ricciardo e Zoraide* and Pacini's *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra*.

Welsh-born **Phillip Joll** studied at the Royal Northern College of Music with Nicholas Powell and Frederick Cox, and later at London's National Opera Studio. His roles with Welsh National Opera have included Wotan in the *Ring* cycle under Sir Reginald Goodall (including the cycles at Royal Opera Covent Garden), Don Fernando (*Fidelio*), the title role in *Wozzeck* and Orest (*Elektra*). In the 1996/97 season he returned to his home company as Rigoletto, his debut in that role, and as Simon Boccanegra in the new production conducted by Carlo Rizzi. He has also performed at the Royal Opera Covent Garden, for Scottish Opera and for Opera North. Recordings include *Parsifal*, *Tristan und Isolde* and Martinů's *The Greek Passion*.

Diana Montague studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. Since her debut as Zerlina with Glyndebourne Touring Opera she has appeared in the world's leading opera houses and concert halls including the Royal

Opera Covent Garden, The Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Théâtre royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires and the Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals.

Engagements have included *Iphigénie en Tauride* (in Buenos Aires, Madrid and with Welsh National Opera), *Le Comte Ory* (in Lausanne, Rome and Glyndebourne), *La clemenza di Tito* and Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Glyndebourne), and *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Lisbon. Diana Montague's many recordings include *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Il crociato in Egitto* (for Opera Rara) as well as a recital disc of operatic arias (for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation).

Elizabeth Bainbridge was born in Lancashire and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She made her debut at the Royal Opera Covent Garden in *Die Walküre* in 1964, and joined the Company the following year. Roles include Mistress Quickly, Suzuki, Amneris, Emilia, Erda, Arvidson, Filipyevna, She-Ancient (*The Midsummer Marriage*), Grandmother Buryja (*Jenůfka*) and Auntie (*Peter Grimes*). She appeared with the Royal Opera at the Teatro alla Scala (1976), in South Korea and Japan (1979), at the 1984 Olympic

Arts Festival, Los Angeles, and in the 1985 Athens Festival. Recordings include *Norma*, *Les Troyens*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Dido and Aeneas* and *The Midsummer Marriage*.

Geoffrey Mitchell's singing career encompassed a remarkably wide repertoire from early to contemporary music. This resulted in conducting invitations from the BBC and subsequently to a wider involvement with his own singers and this led to the establishment of the **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Early recordings resulted in the Choir's long-term involvement with Opera Rara for whom it has recorded fifteen operas. The Choir is currently enjoying a growing reputation with further work from the BBC and international recording companies.

The **London Philharmonic Orchestra** was formed in 1932 by Sir Thomas Beecham. Over the years it has attracted an unmatched series of Principal Conductors, including Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti and Klaus Tennstedt. Its current regular conductors include Music Director Franz Welser-Möst and President Bernard Haitink.

Since 1964 it has been resident symphony orchestra at Glyndebourne Festival Opera

and, in 1992, became resident symphony orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall. It also tours extensively, being the first British orchestra to visit the USSR and China, and its recordings have won many major awards.

David Parry studied with Sergiu Celibidache and began his career as Sir John Pritchard's assistant. He made his debut with English Music Theatre and went on to become a staff conductor at Städtische Bühnen Dortmund and at Opera North. He was Music Director of Opera 80 from 1983 to 1987 and since 1992 has been the founding Music Director of the contemporary opera festival Almeida Opera.

He pursues a busy career both in opera and in concert. His repertoire extends from Mozart and early nineteenth-century Italian opera to Janáček, Britten and contemporary music. In England he has appeared regularly at English National Opera and in concert with the Philharmonia Orchestra. In 1996 he made his debut at the Glyndebourne Festival with *Così fan tutte*.

He is a frequent visitor to Spain where he has appeared with most of the opera companies and symphony orchestras. He gave the Spanish premiere of *Peter Grimes* in

Madrid and in 1996 conducted the first Spanish production of *The Rake's Progress*, inaugurated two new concert halls with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and a new opera house with *Carmen*. He has also appeared in Italy, where he conducted *Ricciardo e Zoraide* in the Rossini Opera Festival at Pesaro, in France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, and in Sweden where he conducted an acclaimed production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Outside Europe David Parry has appeared at the Hong Kong International Festival, with

the UNAM Symphony Orchestra at Mexico City, with a tour of *Carmen* in Japan and, in 1996, conducting a new production of *Kát'a Kabanová* for the New Zealand Festival.

He has recorded extensively for the Opera Rara label, including Donizetti's *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* which won the Prix Cecilia in Belgium, and for Chandos he has conducted the award-winning recording of *Tosca*, three recordings of operatic arias (with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague and Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *The Elixir of Love* and highlights from *Der Rosenkavalier*.

PETER MOORES, CBE, DL

Peter Moores was born in Lancashire, the son of Sir John Moores, founder of the giant Littlewoods mail order, chain store and football pools group. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he read modern languages – he was already fluent in German and Italian. It was opera, however, which was his great love. He had worked at Glyndebourne Festival Opera before going up to university, and after Oxford he became a production student at the Vienna State Opera, combining this with a three-year course at the Vienna Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

By the end of his third year at the Academy Moores had produced the Vienna premiere of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, had worked as Assistant Producer at the San Carlo Opera House, Naples, the Geneva Festival and Rome Opera, and seemed set for a successful operatic career. At this point he received a letter from his father asking him to come home as he was needed in the firm. Family loyalty being paramount, he returned to Liverpool.

By 1977, he was Chairman of Littlewoods. Three years later he stepped down from the post, although still remaining on the Board. He was a director of a merchant bank from 1978 to 1992. From 1981 to 1983 he was a Governor of the BBC, and a Trustee of the Tate Gallery from 1978 until 1985; from 1988 to 1992 he was a director of Scottish Opera. He received the Gold Medal of the Italian Republic in 1974, an Honorary MA from Christ Church, Oxford, in 1975, and was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. In May 1992 he became Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire, and in the New Year's Honours List for 1991, he was made a CBE for his charitable services to the Arts.



Christina Burton/PMF

Peter Moores, CBE, DL

Whilst still in his early twenties, Peter Moores had started giving financial support to various young artists, several of whom – Joan Sutherland, Colin Davis and the late Geraint Evans amongst them – were to become world-famous. In 1964 he set aside a substantial part of his inheritance to establish the Peter Moores Foundation, a charity designed to support those causes dear to his heart: to make music and the arts more accessible to more people; to give encouragement to the young and to improve race relations.

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

In the field of music, the main areas supported by the Peter Moores Foundation are:

the recording of operas from the core repertoire sung in English translation; the recording or staging of rare Italian opera from the *bel canto* era of the early nineteenth century (repertoire which would otherwise only be accessible to scholars); the nurturing of promising young opera singers; new operatic work.

The Foundation awards scholarships annually to students and post-graduates for furthering their vocal studies at the Royal Northern College of Music. In addition, project awards may be given to facilitate language tuition in the appropriate country, attendance at masterclasses or summer courses, specialised repertoire study with an acknowledged expert in the field, or post-graduate performance training.

The Foundation encourages new operatic work by contributing to recordings, the publication of scores and stage productions.

Since 1964 the Foundation has supported the recording of more than forty operas, many of these sung in English, in translation. It has always been Peter Moores's belief that to enjoy opera to the full, there must be no language barrier, particularly for newcomers and particularly in the popular repertoire – hence the *Opera in English* series launched with Chandos in 1995. This includes many of the English language recordings funded by the Foundation in the 1970s and 1980s and is now the largest recorded collection of operas sung in English.

Pietro Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana*

Die Premiere von *Cavalleria rusticana* am Teatro Constanzi in Rom am 17. Mai 1890 war womöglich die erfolgreichste in der Geschichte der Oper. Über Nacht wurde der 26-jährige Pietro Mascagni von provinzieller Bedeutungslosigkeit in schwindelerregende Ruhmeshöhen versetzt, dazu bestimmt, als Erbe Verdis gepriesen zu werden. Der *verismo* zeichnete sich ab.

Fünfundfünfzig Jahre später, bald nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs, starb Mascagni in jenem römischen Hotel, das in den vorangegangenen achtzehn Jahren sein Domizil gewesen war, ein erbitterter Zeuge der Vergangenheit, geschädigt durch seine Beziehungen zum faschistischen Regime Mussolinis. (Das Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, wie sich das Teatro Costanzi inzwischen nennt, trägt über dem Proszenium immer noch eine Inschrift zu Ehren des Duce Benito Mussolini.) In der Nachkriegsära blieben seine übrigen Opern, auf die er große Stücke hielt, unbeachtet und selbst *Cavalleria rusticana* wurde gönnerhaft als plumper Notbehelf für Leoncavallos anspruchsvollere Oper *Pagliacci* behandelt.

Heute kommt Mascagni bei ernsthaften Musikern wieder in Mode. Die römische Oper hat ihre Spielzeit 1996 mit einer hervorragenden Neuinszenierung seiner *Iris* eingeleitet (die sechs Jahre vor *Madama Butterfly* bereits Japan heraufbeschwört). Der englische Dirigent Mark Elder erzählte mir, wie sehr er die 1913 an der Mailänder Scala durchgefallene und seither völlig in Vergessenheit geratene Oper *Parisina* bewundert. Und der Italiener Carlo Rizzi, der sowohl *Cavalleria rusticana* als auch *Pagliacci* dirigiert hat, teilte mir seine Auffassung mit, daß die Opern ganz verschieden und nicht miteinander verwandt seien, daß er jedoch der erstgenannten den Vorzug gebe.

Das Lob, das Mascagni besonders schätzte, war das der Künstler, die an der Uraufführung beteiligt gewesen waren, sowie das der Angehörigen von Chor und Orchester, die beim Verlassen der Proben zu ihren Freunden sagten: "Ihr werdet etwas wirklich Erstaunliches zu hören bekommen!" *Cavalleria rusticana* war eine von drei Opern, die einen vom Verleger Edoardo Sonzogno ausgeschriebenem Wettbewerb für Einakter

gewannen. Sonzogno's Eindruck, nachdem er mit den Preisrichtern konferiert, aber bevor er die Oper im Theater gesehen hatte, lautete seltsamerweise: "Sie sind ein guter Musiker, aber ich fürchte, die Oper ist nicht bühnenwirksam." Giovanni Sgambati, einer der Preisrichter und Professor an der Akademie Santa Cecilia, was scharfsichtiger: "Jegliche Diskussion ist zwecklos; dies ist Musik, die dem Publikum gefällt."

Trotz seiner Unerfahrenheit und unverbrüchlichen Treue gegenüber seiner ersten, immer noch unaufgeführten Oper *Guglielmo Ratcliff* (die er der *Cavalleria* weiterhin vorzog) was Mascagni von der Bühnenwirksamkeit seines Stoffs überzeugt.

Ich habe die Oper in kaum mehr als fünfzig Tagen komponiert, doch die Auswahl des Stoffs ist ein wesentlich langfristigeres Unterfangen. Es herrschte derart starke Leidenschaft in diesen Szenen, daß ich davon tief beeindruckt blieb. Fortan war ich überzeugt, daß ein Komponist, wenn er sein Geschäft versteht, ein wahrhaft bühnenwirksames Werk hervorzubringen imstande sein würde.

Giovanni Vergas Drama geht auf seine eigene Kurzgeschichte zurück, die auch nach heutigem Maßstab auf sieben oder acht Seiten die Essenz Siziliens einfängt. Unter der allgemeinen Mattigkeit lauert Gewalt.

Schelmischer Humor kaschiert sexuelle Leidenschaft. Die Sprache ist zugleich direkt und verblümt, denn manche Dinge brauchen in dieser geschlossenen Gesellschaft einfach nicht gesagt zu werden. Es ist interessant, Auszüge aus der wunderbar derben englischen Übersetzung von D.H. Lawrence zu lesen (siehe Seite 7).

Mascagni begann mit seiner Komposition am Ende. Während er darauf wartete, daß sein widerstrebender Librettist einen Text lieferte, dachte er mehr über das Finale nach als über alles andere.

Das "Hanno ammazzato compare Turiddu" klang mir in den Ohren, aber ich sah keine Möglichkeit, es wirkungsvoll auf die Bühne zu bringen, wenn es mir nicht gelang, die Phrase und abschließenden Orchesterklänge zu finden, die einen starken Effekt bewirken würden. Ich weiß nicht, wie es geschah, aber das Finale kam mir plötzlich in den Sinn, blitzartig eines Morgens auf der Hauptstraße von Camosa, als ich unterwegs war, um eine Unterrichtsstunde zu geben. Und es waren dieselben Septakkorde, die ich gewissenhaft im Manuskript vermerkt habe. So fing ich meine Oper am Ende an.

Es war ein kühner Streich, die Oper mit einem gesprochenen (bzw. geschrieenen) Satz zu beenden. Noch gewagter war es, das sinnträchtige Vorspiel der Oper mit einem

hinter dem Vorhang gesungenen Lied zu unterbrechen; Mascagni jedenfalls ließ es in der Vorlage aus, die er zum Sonzogno-Wettbewerb einreichte, und verriet sein waghalsiges Vorhaben erst bei der mündlichen Befragung. Turiddu *siciliana*, im sizilianischen Dialekt gesungen, vermittelt auf einen Schlag sowohl den Ort der Handlung als auch die verbotene Liebesbeziehung, die deren Haupttriebfeder ist.

Das andere Lied, Lolas *stornello*, welches das große zentrale Duett von Santuzza und Turiddu unterbricht, ist überhaupt nicht sizilianisch, sondern einem alten toskanischen *stornello* nachempfunden. Der Vorwand dafür lautet, daß Turiddu, der als Soldat auf dem italienischen Festland gedient hat, nach seiner Rückkehr damit aufschneidet, indem er seiner Geliebten dieses toskanische Lied beibringt.

Es sind nicht nur die Standardensembles, die *Cavalleria rusticana* auszeichnen. Man braucht sich nur anzuhören, wie die Osterhymne durch den knappen Wortwechsel zwischen Alfio und Mamma Lucia über Turiddu angebliche Fahrt nach Francofonte zum Weinkauf vorbereitet wird, oder wie auf das Trinklied (*brindisi*) die kurze Szene folgt, in der Alfio in Vorlauf zu seiner Herausforderung Wein verschüttet; deren

würdevolle Bedrohlichkeit wird Verga durchaus gerecht.

Es war Mascagni nicht recht, daß seine Opern unter der Bezeichnung *verismo* geführt wurden, und er hat immer geäußert, daß der Begriff auf *Cavalleria rusticana* zuträfe. Immerhin aber räumte er ein, daß im Gegensatz zu den mythischen und klassischen Sujets seiner Konkurrenten das Geheimnis des Erfolges seiner Oper darin begründet lag, daß in ihr "viel Humanität enthalten ist und daß die Leidenschaft mit einer Dringlichkeit und einem Feuer zum Ausdruck gebracht wird, die dem sizilianischen Temperament genau entsprechen".

Wahrhaftigkeit und Melodik. Gern erinnerte sich Mascagni an einen Besuch bei Verdi in Sant' Agata, wo er dem alten Komponisten lauschte, wie dieser am Klavier *Cavalleria rusticana* vom Blatt spielte. Am folgenden Morgen sagte Verdi dann: "Es ist also doch nicht wahr, daß die Tradition der italienischen Melodik am Ende ist."

Ich höre mir, während ich dies schreibe, zwei CDs mit Auszügen aus *Verismo*-Opern an, die mir von der Casa Sonzogno zugeschickt wurden. Die *grandi voci* der Vergangenheit erwecken diese Melodien heute anschaulich zum Leben. Am meisten hat Mascagni die Tenorstimme geliebt. Während

ich Caruso und Gigli, Pertile und Taccani lausche, steigen mir Tränen in die Augen. Wäre ich an jenem schicksalhaften Abend 1890 im Teatro Costanzi zugegen gewesen, wäre mir, glaube ich, das Herz zersprungen.

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Inhaltsangabe

Turiddu, ein sizilianischer Bauernbursche, ist mit Lola verlobt, wird jedoch für ein Jahr zum Militärdienst einberufen. Als er zurückkehrt, hat Lola Alfio geheiratet, worauf Turiddu sich Santuzza zuwendet. Sie werden ein Liebespaar, doch Turiddu hat die Beziehung bald satt; er wendet sich wieder Lola zu und fängt insgeheim eine Affäre mit ihr an.

Die Oper beginnt mit einem Orchestervorspiel. Man hört Turiddu in der Ferne eine Serenade für Lola singen. Es ist Ostersonntag, und die Dorfbewohner haben sich auf dem Platz versammelt. Santuzza erkundigt sich nach Turiddu bei seiner Mutter Lucia. Die sagt, er sei nach Francofonte gefahren, um Wein zu kaufen, aber Santuzza entgegnet, daß er am vergangenen Abend im Dorf gesehen worden sei.

Alfio, der Fuhrmann, singt von der Freude, die ihm sein Wanderleben bereitet, und bittet Lucia, die den örtlichen Weinhandel betreibt,

um ein paar Flaschen, aber sie sagt ebenfalls, daß Turiddu nach Francofonte gefahren sei, um welchen zu holen. Alfio weiß, daß das nicht stimmt, denn er hat ihn am Morgen in der Nähe seines eigenen Hauses gesehen. Lucia will ihn ausfragen, aber Santuzza hält sie davon ab, und Alfio gesellt sich zu den Dorfbewohnern vor der Kirche. Santuzza stimmt allen voran die Osterhymne an.

Während die Dorfbewohner in die Kirche gehen, erklärt Santuzza Lucia, warum sie sich davon abgehalten hat, zu sprechen. Turiddu hat sie betrogen und ist zu seiner alten Geliebten Lola zurückgekehrt, obwohl Lola mit Alfio verheiratet ist. Lucia bemitleidet Santuzza und begibt sich in die Kirche, um für sie zu beten. Santuzza dagegen wartet auf Turiddu und stellt ihn zur Rede. Sie behauptet, zu wissen, wo er die Nacht verbracht hat. Außerdem sagt sie, daß sie ihn immer noch liebe und ihm verzeihen wolle. Turiddu streitet ab, Lola zu lieben, und macht Santuzza Vorwürfe wegen ihrer Eifersucht. Ihr Wortwechsel wird durch Lola unterbrochen, die auf dem Weg zur Kirche singend über den Platz schreitet. Nachdem sie drinnen ist, geht der Streit weiter. Santuzza fleht Turiddu an, zu bleiben, doch er stößt sie zu Boden und folgt Lola in die Kirche.

Kaum ist Turiddu fort, da erscheint Alfio auf der Suche nach Lola. In ihrem Zorn klärt Santuzza ihn darüber auf, daß Lola ihn mit Turiddu betrogen hat. Alfio schwört Rache.

Ein musikalisches Intermezzo bietet den Ostersegen dar.

Die Gemeinde verläßt die Kirche. Turiddu ist gehobener Stimmung, weil er mit Lola zusammen ist. Er macht auf einen Schluck im Weinhandel seiner Mutter Halt und lädt die Dorfbewohner zum Mittrinken ein. Alfio tritt herzu, und Turiddu bietet ihm Wein an, den er ablehnt. Die Frauen entfernen sich, darunter auch Lola, und Alfio fordert Turiddu zum Zweikampf heraus. Sie verabreden sich zum Duell hinter den Gemüsegärten.

Turiddu bittet seine Mutter um ihren Segen und trägt ihr auf, sich um Santuzza zu kümmern, falls er nicht zurückkehrt. Er geht, und Santuzza erscheint, um Lucia zu trösten. Da ertönt in der Ferne ein Schrei. Turiddu ist im Kampf getötet worden.

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Übersetzung: Anne Steeb/Bernd Müller

Dennis O'Neill, der als Sohn irischer und walisischer Eltern in Wales geboren wurde, ist einer der führenden Tenöre der Welt und Verdi-Spezialist. Er unterhält seit langem

Verbindungen zur Londoner Royal Opera Covent Garden und hat dort in letzter Zeit Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos und Radames (*Aida*) gesungen.

In Nordamerika war er unter anderem an der Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* und *Rigoletto*), an der Chicago Lyric Opera, an den Opernhäusern von San Francisco, San Diego und Vancouver engagiert und hat Konzerte mit den Sinfonieorchestern von Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal und Ottawa sowie beim Cincinnati Festival gegeben. Er ist häufig an der Bayerischen Staatsoper in München zu Gast und ist in Europa außerdem an den Opernhäusern von Wien, Bonn, Köln, Nizza, Zürich, Paris, Oslo, Brüssel und Barcelona aufgetreten.

Zu seinen zahlreichen Aufnahmen zählen Soloalben, Verdis Requiem mit Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* mit Slatkin und folgende Videos: *Der Rosenkavalier* mit Solti, *Die Fledermaus* mit Kiri te Kanawa unter der Leitung von Plácido Domingo, *Macbeth* mit Sinopoli und *Mefistofele* für San Francisco Opera. Für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation hat er *Tosca*, *La bohème* und ein Soloalbum aufgezeichnet.

Die Sopranistin **Nelly Miricioiu** wird als eine der interessantesten und vielseitigsten

Künstlerinnen unserer Zeit mit einem erstaunlichen Repertoire gepriesen, das die Heldinnen von Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi und Puccini umfaßt. 1986 gab sie ihr Debüt an der Wiener Staatsoper in *Manon Lescaut*, gefolgt von *La bohème*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La traviata* und *Maria Stuarda*. Außerdem ist sie an der English National Opera (*La traviata*), am Teatro alla Scala, an der Opéra comique, der Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, am Opernhaus von Madrid, an der Deutschen Oper Berlin, dem Théâtre royal de la Monnaie in Brüssel, in Toulouse, München, Monte Carlo, Stuttgart und Kopenhagen aufgetreten. Sie hat auch an der Metropolitan Opera in New York, der San Francisco Opera, der Washington Opera und bei der Opera Company of Philadelphia gastiert. Zu ihren Aufnahmen zählen, für Opera Rara, Mercadantes *Orazi e Curiazi*, Donizettis *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* und *Maria di Rudenz*, Rossinis *Ricciardo e Zoraide* und Pacinis *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra*.

Der gebürtige Waliser **Phillip Joll** hat am Royal Northern College of Music bei Nicholas Powell und Frederick Cox studiert und später am National Opera Studio in London. An der Welsh National Opera hat er unter anderem in dem von Sir Reginald Goodall geleiteten Ring-

Zyklus den Wotan gesungen (auch am Royal Opera Covent Garden), Don Fernando (*Fidelio*), die Titelrolle von *Wozzeck* und Orest (*Elektra*). In der Spielzeit 1996/97 ist er zu seiner Heimattruppe zurückgekehrt, wo er erstmals als Rigoletto zu sehen war, und als Simon Boccanegra in einer von Carlo Rizzi dirigierten Neuproduktion. Außerdem ist er am Royal Opera Covent Garden aufgetreten, an der Scottish Opera und an der Opera North. Zu seinen Aufnahmen zählen *Parsifal*, *Tristan und Isolde* und Martinus *Griechische Passion*.

Diana Montague hat am Royal Northern College of Music studiert. Seit ihrem Debüt als Zerlina an der Glyndebourne Touring Opera ist sie in den führenden Opernhäusern und Konzertsälen der Welt aufgetreten, darunter auch am Royal Opera Covent Garden, an der Metropolitan Opera New York, dem Théâtre royal de la Monnaie in Brüssel, der Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, am Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires sowie bei den Festspielen von Bayreuth und Salzburg.

Sie hat unter anderem *Iphigénie en Tauride* (in Buenos Aires, Madrid und an der Welsh National Opera), *La clemenza di Tito* und Glucks *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Glyndebourne), *Le Comte Ory* (in Lausanne, Rome und

Glyndebourne) und *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Lissabon gegeben. Die zahlreichen Schallplattenaufnahmen Diana Montagues umfassen *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Il crociato in Egitto* (für Opera Rara) sowie ein Programm mit Opernarien (für Chandos und die Peter Moores Foundation).

Elizabeth Bainbridge wurde in Lancashire geboren und hat an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama studiert. Sie gab 1964 ihr Royal Opera Covent Garden Debüt in der *Walküre* und trat im folgenden Jahr dort ins Ensemble ein. Zu ihren Partien gehören *Mistress Quickly*, *Suzuki*, *Amneris*, *Emilia*, *Erda*, *Arvidson*, *Filipjewna*, *She-Ancient* (*The Midsummer Marriage*), die alte *Buryjovká* (*Jenůfa*) und *Auntie* (*Peter Grimes*). Sie hat mit der Royal Opera am Teatro alla Scala gastiert (1976), außerdem in Südkorea und Japan (1979), beim Olympic Arts Festival in Los Angeles (1984) und beim Athener Festival 1985. Zu ihren Aufnahmen zählen *Norma*, *Les Troyens*, *Das schlaue Füchlein*, *Dido and Aeneas* und *The Midsummer Marriage*.

Geoffrey Mitchell hat im Lauf seiner Gesangskarriere ein erstaunlich umfangreiches

Repertoire erschlossen, von alter bis hin zu zeitgenössischer Musik. Daraus ergaben sich erst Dirigieraufträge von der BBC, dann eine ausgedehntere Zusammenarbeit mit seinen Sängern, die wiederum zur Gründung des **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir** führte. Frühe Schallplattenaufnahmen hatten zur Folge, daß der Chor langfristige Beziehungen zu Opera Rara einging, für die er 15 Opern aufgezeichnet hat. Derzeit genießt er dank weiterer Verpflichtungen für die BBC und internationale Schallplattenfirmen wachsendes Ansehen.

Seit seiner Gründung im Jahr 1932 durch Sir Thomas Beecham hat das **London Philharmonic Orchestra** unter der Leitung unzähliger prominenter Chefdirigenten gestanden, darunter Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti und Klaus Tennstedt. Im Augenblick zählen zu seinen regulären Dirigenten der Musikdirektor des Orchesters, Franz Welser-Möst und der Präsident, Bernard Haitink.

Seit 1964 ist das London Philharmonic Orchestra Residenzorchester bei der Glyndebourne Festival Opera und seit 1992 an der Royal Festival Hall. Es unternimmt zahlreiche Konzertreisen und besuchte als erstes britisches Orchester die UdSSR und

China. Seine Platteneinspielungen sind vielfach preisgekrönt worden.

David Parry studierte bei Sergiu Celibidache und begann seine Laufbahn als Sir John Pritchards musikalischer Assistent. Er debütierte mit dem English Music Theatre und wurde Kapellmeister an den Städtischen Bühnen Dortmund sowie an Opera North in Leeds. Von 1983 bis 1987 fungierte er als Musikdirektor für Opera 80 und seit 1992 ist er der Musikdirektor (und Gründer) des zeitgenössischen Opern-Festivals Almeida Opera.

Parrys Tätigkeitsbereich ist nicht nur das Opernhaus, sondern auch der Konzertsaal. Sein Repertoire erstreckt sich von Mozart und der italienischen Oper des frühen 19. Jahrhunderts bis zu Janáček, Britten und zeitgenössischer Musik. In England dirigiert er regelmäßig an der English National Opera und konzertiert mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra. 1996 machte er mit *Così fan tutte* sein Debüt bei dem Glyndebourne Festival.

David Parry gastiert häufig in Spanien, wo er bereits mit den meisten Opernkompanien und Sinfonieorchestern aufgetreten ist. Die spanische Premiere von *Peter Grimes* fand unter seiner Leitung in Madrid statt;

1996 dirigierte er die erste spanische Inszenierung von *The Rake's Progress* (Strawinsky) und weihte zwei neue Konzertsäle mit der Neunten Sinfonie von Beethoven sowie ein neues Opernhaus mit *Carmen* ein. In Italien leitete er *Ricciardo e Zoraide* bei dem Rossini-Festival in Pesaro. Er tritt in Frankreich, Deutschland, Belgien, den Niederlanden und Schweden auf, wo er eine gefeierte Inszenierung von Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* dirigierte.

Außerhalb Europas ist David Parry bei dem Hongkong International Festival und mit dem UNAM Symphony Orchestra in Mexico City aufgetreten, war mit *Carmen* in Japan auf Tournee und leitete eine Neuinszenierung von *Kát'a Kabanová* für das Festival in Neuseeland.

Parry hat zahlreiche Werke für das Label Opera Rara eingespielt, u.a. *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* von Donizetti, das in Belgien mit dem Prix Cecilia ausgezeichnet wurde; für Chandos hat er eine preisgekrönte *Tosca* aufgenommen, drei Aufnahmen operatischen Arien (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague und Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *L'elisir d'amore* und Auszüge vom *Rosenkavalier*.

Pietro Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana*

La présentation de *Cavalleria rusticana* au Teatro Costanzi de Rome, le 17 mai 1890, est sans doute la création qui a remporté le plus de succès dans toute l'histoire de l'opéra. Du jour au lendemain, à l'âge de vingt-six ans, Pietro Mascagni s'est trouvé propulsé de l'obscurité provinciale vers une renommée étourdissante et a été considéré comme l'héritier de Verdi. Le vérisme venait de trouver sa définition.

Cinquante-cinq ans plus tard, juste après la fin de la Seconde guerre mondiale, Mascagni meurt dans l'hôtel romain où il habitait depuis dix-huit ans, vieille relique amère, contaminée par ses sympathies envers le régime fasciste de Mussolini. (Le Teatro Costanzi, connu aujourd'hui sous le nom du Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, porte encore à l'avant-scène une inscription au Duce Benito Mussolini). Durant la période qui suit la guerre, ses autres opéras, dont il faisait grand cas, sont négligés et même *Cavalleria rusticana* est traité avec condescendance comme le complément rudimentaire de l'ouvrage plus sophistiqué de Leoncavallo, *Pagliacci* (Paillasse).

Aujourd'hui, Mascagni revient à la mode chez les musiciens sérieux. L'Opéra de Rome a inauguré sa saison 1996 avec une superbe nouvelle production de son *Iris* (évocation du Japon en avance de six ans sur *Madama Butterfly*). Le chef d'orchestre anglais Mark Elder m'a dit combien il admirait *Parisina*, ouvrage totalement négligé qui fit un fiasco à La Scala en 1913. Lorsqu'il a dirigé dans la même soirée *Cavalleria rusticana* et *Pagliacci*, l'Italien Carlo Rizzi, m'a dit qu'il trouvait ces opéras très différents et sans lien de parenté, mais qu'il préférerait le premier.

Mascagni attachait beaucoup de prix aux compliments des artistes qui participaient à la création, et à ceux de l'orchestre et du chœur qui, en quittant le théâtre après les répétitions, disaient à leurs amis: "Vous allez entendre quelque chose de vraiment stupéfiant!" *Cavalleria rusticana* est l'un des trois ouvrages lyriques couronnés au concours d'opéras en un acte organisé par l'éditeur Edoardo Sonzogno. Curieusement, Sonzogno, après s'être entretenu avec les membres du jury, mais avant d'avoir vu l'opéra au théâtre, avait dit à Mascagni: "Vous êtes un bon musicien, mais je

crains que l'opéra ne soit pas théâtral." L'un des membres du jury, Giovanni Sgambati, professeur à l'Académie Sainte-Cécile, percevait mieux les choses: "La discussion est inutile; c'est une musique qui plaît au public."

Malgré son inexpérience et une fidélité absolue à son premier ouvrage, pas encore représenté à l'époque, *Guglielmo Ratcliff* (qu'il a toujours persisté à préférer à *Cavalleria*), Mascagni était persuadé que son sujet était fait pour le théâtre.

J'ai composé l'opéra en un peu plus de cinquante jours, mais le choix du sujet remonte à une date beaucoup plus ancienne. J'ai assisté, il y a quelques années, à une représentation du drame de Verga et j'en ai gardé une émotion profonde et inoubliable. Il y avait une passion si forte dans ces scènes que j'en suis resté bouleversé. A partir de ce moment, j'ai senti que, si un compositeur connaissait son affaire, il créerait une œuvre réellement théâtrale.

Le drame de Giovanni Verga est tiré d'une de ses nouvelles, qui, même aujourd'hui, capte en sept ou huit pages l'essence de la Sicile. La violence se dissimule sous la langueur. Un humour effronté masque la passion sexuelle. Le discours est à la fois direct et indirect, car certaines choses n'ont tout bonnement pas besoin d'être dites dans cette société fermée. Il est intéressant de lire une partie de la

truculente traduction anglaise que D.H. Lawrence a fait de ce drame (voir page 7).

Mascagni a commencé la composition par la fin, en attendant le librettiste, qui ne montrait pas beaucoup d'entrain à lui remettre son texte:

Je pensais au finale plus qu'à tout autre chose.

J'ai entendu sonner à mes oreilles cet "Hanno ammazzato compare Turiddu" [On a tué Turiddu], mais je ne voyais pas la possibilité de le faire ressortir sans trouver la phrase et les harmonies orchestrales de conclusion qui produiraient un grand effet. Je ne sais pas comment c'est arrivé, mais le finale m'est venu à l'esprit d'un seul coup, en un éclair, un matin dans la rue principale de Camosa, alors que j'allais donner une leçon. Et ce sont ces mêmes sept accords que j'ai scrupuleusement conservés dans le manuscrit. J'ai ainsi commencé mon opéra par la fin.

Il était audacieux d'achever l'opéra sur une phrase parlée (ou criée). Encore plus dangereux d'interrompre le prélude évocateur de l'opéra par un air chanté derrière le rideau, à tel point que Mascagni a omis de le soumettre au jury de Sonzogno et qu'il n'a révélé son audace qu'à l'examen oral. La *Sicilienne* de Turiddu, chantée en dialecte sicilien, exprime d'emblée le lieu et la liaison illicite que constitue le mobile principal de l'action.

L'autre air, le *stornello* (refrain) de Lola, qui interrompt le grand duo central de Santuzza et Turiddu, n'a rien de sicilien, mais c'est une imitation d'un vieux *stornello* toscan. Il se justifie par le fait que Turiddu, qui a été soldat sur le continent italien, parade en enseignant cette chanson toscane à sa petite amie.

Ce ne sont pas les seuls morceaux qui distinguent *Cavalleria rusticana*. Écoutez comment l'Hymne pascal est mis en évidence par l'échange succinct entre Alfio et Mamma Lucia à propos du voyage présumé de Turiddu à Francofonte pour acheter du vin. Ensuite, lorsque le vin est bu, voyez la façon dont le brindisi est suivi d'une courte scène dans laquelle Alfio renverse délibérément le vin: c'est un prélude au défi, dont la menace solennelle est digne de Verga.

Mascagni détestait que l'on qualifie ses opéras de "véristes" et a toujours nié l'appartenance de *Cavalleria rusticana* à ce genre. Mais il reconnaissait que, par opposition aux sujets mythiques et classiques de ses concurrents, le secret du succès de son opéra résidait dans le fait qu'il "y a beaucoup d'humanité et que la passion s'exprime avec un élan et une fougue qui caractérisent exactement le tempérament sicilien".

Vérité et mélodie. Mascagni gardait précieusement le souvenir d'une visite à Verdi

à Sant' Agata, où il avait surpris le vieux compositeur en train de déchiffrer *Cavalleria rusticana* au piano. Le lendemain matin Verdi disait: "Ainsi, il est faux d'affirmer que la tradition de la mélodie italienne est morte."

En écrivant ce texte, j'ai écouté deux compilations sur disque CD d'opéras véristes que m'a envoyées la Casa Sonzogno. *Le grandi voci* du passé font aujourd'hui revivre avec éclat ces mélodies. Mascagni aimait avant tout la voix de ténor. En écoutant Caruso et Gigli, Pertile et Taccani, des larmes me montent aux yeux. Si j'avais été présent au Teatro Costanzi en cette soirée historique de 1890, je pense que mon cœur aurait explosé.

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Synopsis

Turiddu, jeune villageois sicilien, s'est engagé envers Lola, mais il est appelé à servir un an dans l'armée. A son retour, il découvre que Lola a épousé Alfio. Il se tourne vers Santuzza, dont il devient l'amant, mais Turiddu se lasse de Santuzza, revient vers Lola et a une liaison secrète avec elle.

L'opéra commence par un prélude orchestral. On entend Turiddu chanter au loin une sérénade à Lola. C'est le dimanche de Pâques et les villageois traversent la place.

Santuzza demande des nouvelles de Turiddu à la mère de celui-ci, Lucia. Elle lui répond qu'il est allé à Francofonte acheter du vin, mais Santuzza lui affirme qu'on l'a vu au village la nuit précédente.

Alfio, le charretier du village, chante le plaisir qu'il prend à sa vie itinérante et demande du vin à Lucia, la cabaretière. Celle-ci lui répond que Turiddu est allé en chercher à Francofonte. Mais Alfio sait que c'est faux, puisqu'il l'a vu de ses yeux au début de la matinée près de sa propre maison. Lucia veut lui poser d'autres questions, mais Santuzza l'interrompt et Alfio s'en va, alors que les villageois se réunissent devant l'église. Entraînés par la voix de Santuzza, ils chantent l'hymne pascal.

Lorsque les villageois entrent dans l'église, Santuzza explique à Lucia pourquoi elle l'a empêchée de parler. Turiddu a trahi son amour et est retourné à son ancienne passion, Lola, bien que celle-ci ait épousé Alfio. Lucia a pitié de Santuzza et entre dans l'église afin de prier pour elle, pendant que Santuzza attend et affronte Turiddu; elle lui révèle qu'elle sait où il a passé la nuit. Elle lui dit aussi qu'elle l'aime encore et lui pardonnera. Turiddu nie aimer Lola et reproche à Santuzza sa jalousie. Leur discussion est interrompue par la voix de Lola, qui chante en traversant la place pour se

rendre à l'église. Lorsqu'elle y entre, la discussion reprend. Santuzza supplie Turiddu de rester, mais il la jette à terre et suit Lola dans l'église.

Turiddu n'est pas sitôt parti qu'apparaît Alfio à la recherche de Lola. Dans sa colère, Santuzza lui explique que Lola le trompe avec Turiddu. Alfio jure de se venger.

Un intermezzo musical évoque la bénédiction du jour de Pâques.

Les fidèles sortent de l'église. Turiddu est très gai, car il est avec Lola. Il s'arrête pour boire un verre au cabaret de sa mère et invite les villageois à se joindre à lui. Alfio s'approche et Turiddu lui offre un verre, qu'il refuse. Les femmes sortent, emmenant Lola avec elles; Alfio provoque Turiddu en duel. Ils décident de se retrouver de l'autre côté des potagers.

Turiddu supplie sa mère de le bénir et lui demande de veiller sur Santuzza s'il ne revenait pas. Il s'en va et Santuzza arrive pour reconforter Lucia. On entend un cri dans le lointain. Un duel a eu lieu et Turiddu a été tué.

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Traduction: Marie-Stella Pâris

Né au Pays de Galles de parents irlandais et gallois, Dennis O'Neill est l'un des grands

ténors de notre temps, et un spécialiste des œuvres de Verdi. Il jouit d'une longue association avec le théâtre de Royal Opera Covent Garden de Londres où il a chanté récemment les rôles de Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos et Radames (*Aida*).

En Amérique du Nord, il s'est produit au Metropolitan Opera de New York (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* et *Rigoletto*), à Lyric Opera de Chicago, à San Francisco, San Diego et à l'Opéra de Vancouver. Il a également donné des concerts avec les orchestres de Philadelphie, Cleveland, Montréal, Ottawa et dans le cadre du festival de Cincinnati. En Europe, il est fréquemment invité par le Bayerische Staatsoper de Munich, et a chanté dans les opéras de Vienne, Bonn, Cologne, Nice, Zurich, Paris, Oslo, Bruxelles et Barcelone.

Son importante discographie comporte des albums en soliste, le Requiem de Verdi avec Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* avec Slatkin, des vidéos de *Der Rosenkavalier* avec Solti, *Die Fledermaus* avec Kiri te Kanawa sous la direction de Plácido Domingo, *Macbeth* avec Sinopoli, et *Mefistofele* pour le San Francisco Opera. Pour Chandos et la Peter Moores Foundation, il a enregistré *Tosca*, *La bohème* et un album en soliste.

La soprano **Nelly Miricioiu** est saluée comme étant l'une des artistes de notre temps les plus passionnantes et aux talents les plus multiples. Elle possède un éblouissant répertoire comprenant les héroïnes de Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi et Puccini. En 1986, elle fit ses débuts à l'Opéra d'Etat de Vienne dans *Manon Lescaut* qui furent suivis de *La bohème*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La traviata* et *Maria Stuarda*. Elle s'est également produite à l'English National Opera (*La traviata*), au Teatro alla Scala de Milan, à l'Opéra comique et l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, à Madrid, Berlin (Deutsche Oper), Bruxelles (Théâtre royal de la Monnaie), Toulouse, Munich, Monte Carlo, Stuttgart et Copenhague. Aux Etats-Unis, Nelly Miricioiu a chanté au Metropolitan Opera de New York, au San Francisco Opera, au Washington Opera et avec l'Opera Company of Philadelphia. Parmi ses enregistrements figurent, pour Opera Rara, *Orsini e Curiazi* de Mercadante, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* et *Maria di Rudenz* de Donizetti, *Ricciardo e Zoraide* de Rossini et *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* de Pacini.

Phillip Joll est né au Pays de Galles. Il a fait ses études au Royal Northern College of Music avec Nicholas Powell et Frederick Cox, puis au National Opera Studio de Londres. Au Welsh

National Opera ses rôles ont été ceux de Wotan dans le cycle du *Ring* sous la direction de Reginald Goodall (incluant des cycles au Royal Opera Covent Garden), Don Fernando (*Fidelio*), le rôle titre dans *Wozzeck* et Oreste (*Elektra*). Pour la saison 1996/1997, il est revenu au Welsh National Opera où il a fait ses débuts dans le rôle de Rigoletto, et dans une nouvelle production de *Simon Boccanegra* sous la direction de Carlo Rizzo. Il a également chanté au Royal Opera Covent Garden, au Scottish Opera et à l'Opera North. Ses enregistrements comportent *Parsifal*, *Tristan und Isolde* et *La Passion grecque* de Martinů.

Diana Montague a fait ses études au Royal Northern College of Music. Depuis ses débuts dans le rôle de Zerlina avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, elle s'est produite sur les plus grandes scènes lyriques et dans les principales salles de concert du monde comme le Royal Opera Covent Garden, le Metropolitan Opera à New York, le Théâtre de la Monnaie à Bruxelles, l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, le Teatro Colon à Buenos Aires; elle a participé aux festivals de Bayreuth et Salzbourg.

Elle a chanté, entre autres, dans *Iphigénie en Tauride* (à Buenos Aires, Madrid et avec le Welsh National Opera), *Le Comte Ory* (à

Lausanne, Rome et Glyndebourne), *La clemenza di Tito* et *Orfeo ed Euridice* de Gluck (Glyndebourne) ainsi que dans *Ariadne auf Naxos* à Lisbonne. Diana Montague a réalisé de nombreux enregistrements, gravant entre autres *I Capuletti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Il crociato in Egitto* (pour Opera Rara) ainsi qu'un disque d'airs d'opéra (pour Chandos en association avec la Peter Moores Foundation).

Elizabeth Bainbridge est née dans le comté de Lancashire, et a fait ses études à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres. Elle fit ses débuts au Royal Opera Covent Garden dans *Die Walküre* en 1964, et entra dans la compagnie l'année suivante. Ses rôles furent Mistress Quickly, Suzuki, Amneris, Emilia, Erda, Arvidson, Filipyevna, une Ancienne (*The Midsummer Marriage*), Grand-mère Buryja (*Jenůfa*) et Auntie (*Peter Grimes*). Elle s'est produite avec le Royal Opera au Teatro alla Scala de Milan en 1976, en Corée du Sud et le Japon en 1979, à l'Olympic Arts Festival de Los Angeles en 1984, et au festival d'Athènes en 1985. Parmi ses enregistrements figurent *Norma*, *Les Troyens*, *Le Petit renard rusé*, *Dido and Aeneas* et *The Midsummer Marriage*. La carrière de chanteur de Geoffrey Mitchell a

couvert un répertoire d'une remarquable étendue allant de la musique ancienne à la musique contemporaine. Elle prit son essor à la suite de plusieurs invitations à diriger que lui offrit la BBC, et à une collaboration plus étroite avec ses propres chanteurs. C'est ainsi qu'il fut amené à fonder le **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir** avec lequel il a enregistré quinze opéras pour Opera Rara. Jouissant d'une réputation grandissante, ils ont d'autres projets avec la BBC et des maisons de disques internationales.

Le **London Philharmonic Orchestra**, qui a été formé par Sir Thomas Beecham en 1932, a attiré au fil des années une série inégalable de premiers chefs, dont Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti et Klaus Tennstedt. Parmi les chefs qui le dirigent régulièrement à l'heure actuelle se trouvent son directeur musical, Franz Welser-Möst, et son président, Bernard Haitink.

L'orchestre, qui est depuis 1964 l'orchestre symphonique en résidence au Glyndebourne Festival Opera, est devenu en 1992 l'orchestre symphonique en résidence au Royal Festival Hall. Il effectue aussi de vastes tournées – il a été le premier orchestre à se rendre en URSS et en Chine et ses enregistrements ont remporté maintes

récompenses prestigieuses.

David Parry étudia avec Sergiu Celibidache et commença sa carrière comme assistant de Sir John Pritchard. Il fit ses débuts avec l'English Music Theatre et devint plus tard chef appointé du Städtische Bühnen Dortmund et d'Opera North. Directeur musical d'Opera 80 de 1983 à 1987, il est depuis 1992 le directeur musical fondateur du festival d'opéra contemporain Almeida Opera.

Il poursuit une carrière très active à l'opéra et dans les salles de concert. Son répertoire va de Mozart et de l'opéra italien du début du XIXe siècle à Janáček, Britten et à la musique contemporaine. En Angleterre, il a fait des apparitions régulières à l'English National Opera et lors de concerts avec le Philharmonia Orchestra. En 1996, il a fait ses débuts au Festival de Glyndebourne avec *Così fan tutte*.

Il se rend fréquemment en Espagne où il s'est produit avec la plupart des troupes d'opéra et des orchestres symphoniques. Il a donné la première espagnole de *Peter Grimes* à Madrid et, en 1996, a dirigé la première mise en scène espagnole de *The Rake's Progress*. Il a aussi inauguré deux nouvelles salles de concert avec une interprétation de la Neuvième Symphonie de Beethoven et un nouvel opéra

avec *Carmen*. Il s'est également produit en Italie où il a dirigé *Ricciardo e Zoraide* au Festival d'opéra de Pesaro (consacré à Rossini), mais il s'est aussi rendu en France, en Allemagne, en Belgique, aux Pays-Bas, et en Suède où il a dirigé une mise en scène très applaudie du *Midsummer Night's Dream* de Britten.

Hors d'Europe, David Parry s'est produit au Festival international de Hong Kong, a dirigé l'UNAM Symphony Orchestra à Mexico, a fait une tournée consacrée à *Carmen* au Japon, et, en 1996, a dirigé une nouvelle mise en

scène de *Kát'a Kabanová* au Festival de Nouvelle-Zélande.

Il a réalisé un grand nombre d'enregistrements pour le label Opera Rara, entre autres *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* de Donizetti, qui a remporté le prix Cecilia en Belgique, et c'est chez Chandos qu'il a dirigé son enregistrement primé de *Tosca*, trois disques d'aires operatiques (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague et Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *L'elisir d'amore* et extraits du *Rosenkavalier*.

Pietro Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana*

Il lancio di *Cavalleria rusticana* al Teatro Costanzi di Roma il 17 maggio 1890 fu forse la premiere di maggior successo nella storia dell'opera. Dalla sera alla mattina il ventiseienne Pietro Mascagni venne catapultato dall'oscurità della provincia ad una fama da capogiro, fino ad essere dichiarato l'erede di Verdi. Il Verismo ebbe la sua definizione.

Cinquantacinque anni più tardi, subito dopo la fine della seconda guerra mondiale, Mascagni moriva a Roma in quella camera d'albergo dove aveva vissuto per diciotto anni, amaro vecchio cimelio, contaminato dalla sua alleanza con il regime fascista di Mussolini. Il Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, già Teatro Costanzi, ancora reca una lapide al Duce Benito Mussolini in alto sul proscenio. Nell'era postbellica le altre sue opere, sulle quali aveva tanto fidato, giacevano ignorate e persino *Cavalleria rusticana* veniva trattata con condiscendenza quale rozza zavorra per la più fine *Pagliacci* di Leoncavallo.

Oggi Mascagni sta tornando in auge presso musicisti autorevoli. L'Opera di Roma ha inaugurato la sua stagione 1996 con una magnifica nuova produzione della sua *Iris*

(un'evocazione del Giappone che di sei anni precede *Madama Butterfly*). Il direttore d'orchestra inglese Mark Elder mi ha detto di aver molto ammirato la del tutto negletta *Parisina* che fece fiasco alla Scala nel 1913. L'Italiano Carlo Rizzi, quando diresse l'accoppiamento *Cavalleria rusticana* e *Pagliacci*, mi disse che a suo parere le due opere erano molto differenti e non imparentate ma che lui preferiva la prima.

La lode particolarmente cara a Mascagni era quella degli interpreti che presero parte alla premiere e quella degli orchestrali e coristi i quali, uscendo dal teatro dopo le prove, dissero ai loro amici: "Sentirete qualcosa di veramente sorprendente!" *Cavalleria rusticana* fu una delle tre opere che vinsero il concorso per un'opera in un atto sponsorizzato dall'editore Edoardo Sonzogno. Stranamente, l'impressione di Sonzogno dopo aver conferito con i giudici ma prima di aver visto l'opera in teatro fu: "È un buon musicista, ma temo che l'opera non sia teatrale." Uno dei giudici, Giovanni Sgambati, professore a Santa Cecilia, fu più perspicace: "Le discussioni sono inutili; questa è musica che piace al pubblico."

Malgrado la sua inesperienza e la sua superiore fedeltà alla primogenita ma tuttora non rappresentata *Guglielmo Ratcliff* (che si ostinò a preferire a *Cavalleria*) Mascagni aveva fiducia nella teatralità del suo soggetto.

Ho composto l'opera in poco più di cinquanta giorni, ma la scelta del soggetto è di gran lunga antecedente. Fui presente alcuni anni fa ad una rappresentazione del dramma di Verga e ne riportai una forte ed indimenticabile emozione. C'era una passione così potente in quelle scene che ne rimasi profondamente colpito. Da allora ho sentito che se un compositore sapeva il suo mestiere ne avrebbe creato un vero pezzo teatrale.

Il dramma di Giovanni Verga derivava dalla sua novella che ancor oggi cattura, in sette o otto pagine, la quintessenza della Sicilia. La violenza è in agguato dietro il languore. Un umorismo sfrontato maschera la passione carnale. Il discorso è al contempo diretto ed obliquo, giacché ci sono cose che non occorre dire in questa impenetrabile società. Questa è l'ultima pagina della novella.

Entrambi erano bravi tiratori; Turiddu toccò la prima botta, e fu a tempo a prenderla nel braccio; come la rese, la rese buona, e tirò all'anguinaia.

– Ah! compare Turiddu! avete proprio intenzione di ammazzarmi.

– Sì, ve l'ho detto; ora che ho visto la mia vecchiaia mel pollaio, mi pare di averla sempre dinanzi agli occhi.

– Apriteli bene, gli occhi! – gli gridò compar Alfio – che sto per rendervi la buona misura. – Come egli stava in guardia tutto raccolto per tenersi la sinistra sulla ferita, che gli doleva, a quasi strisciava per terra col gomito, acchiappò rapidamente una manata di polvere e la gettò negli occhi dell'avversario.

– Ah! – urlò Turiddu accecato – son morto. – Ei cercava di salvarsi, facendo salti disperati all'indietro; ma compar Alfio lo raggiunse con un'altra botta nello stomaco e una terza nella gola.

– E tre! questa è per la casa che tu m'hai adornato. Ora tua madre lascerà stare le galline.

– Turiddu annaspò un pezzo di qua e di là fra i fichidindia e poi cadde come un masso. Il sangue gli gorgogliava spumeggiando nella gola, e non poté proferire nemmeno: – Ah! mamma mia! – Mascagni cominciò la sua composizione dalla fine. Mentre aspettava che il suo riluttante librettista gli consegnasse un testo,

Ho pensato al finale più che a qualsiasi altra cosa. Ho sentito "Hanno ammazzato compare Turiddu" ronzarmi nelle orecchie, ma non vedevo la possibilità di riuscita se non trovavo la frase e la armonie orchestrali conclusive che

facessero un forte effetto. Non so com'è andata, ma il finale mi è piombato nella mente d'un tratto, una mattina, per il corso di Camosa mentre andavo a far lezione. Ed erano quegli stessi accordi di settima che ho scrupolosamente mantenuto nel manoscritto. Fu così che cominciai la mia opera dalla fine.

Fu un colpo ardito quello di finire l'opera con una frase parlata (o urlata). Ancora più pericoloso era interrompere il suggestivo preludio dell'opera con una canzone cantata dietro il sipario, tant'è vero che Mascagni l'omise dalla sua presentazione ai giudici di Sonzogno e solamente rivelò la sua bravata all'esame orale. La siciliana di Turiddu, cantata in dialetto siciliano, immediatamente evoca sia la località sia l'illecita relazione che è la causa prima dell'azione.

L'altra canzone (lo stornello di Lola), che interrompe il grande duetto centrale di Santuzza e Turiddu, non è affatto siciliana, ma è un'imitazione di un vecchio stornello toscano. La scusa è che Turiddu, tornato da fare il soldato nel continente italiano, si fa bello insegnando questa canzone toscana alla sua amante.

Non sono solo i singoli numeri che contraddistinguono *Cavalleria rusticana*. Si ascolti come l'inno pasquale è messo in evidenza dal conciso colloquio fra Alfio e

Mamma Lucia circa il presunto viaggio di Turiddu a Francofonte per acquistare del vino. E poi il modo in cui il Brindisi, quando viene bevuto il vino, è seguito dalla breve scena in cui Alfio di proposito versa il vino a preludere la sfida, la cui dignitosa minaccia è degna di Verga.

Mascagni non poteva sopportare che le sue opere venissero classificate come verismo, e sempre negò che *Cavalleria rusticana* vi appartenesse. Ma pure riconobbe che, in contrasto con i soggetti classici o mitologici dei suoi rivali, il segreto del successo della sua opera era dovuto al fatto che "c'è tanta umanità e che la passione è espressa con un impeto ed un fuoco che sono esattamente il temperamento siciliano".

Verità e melodia. Mascagni tenne in gran pregio una visita a Verdi a Sant'Agata allorché il vecchio compositore fu scoperto a leggere *Cavalleria rusticana* al pianoforte. La mattina dopo Verdi disse: "Allora non è vero che la tradizione della melodia italiana è finita."

Mentre sto scrivendo ascolto due raccolte in CD di opere veriste che mi sono state inviate dalla Casa Sonzogno. *Le grandi voci* del passato vividamente portano oggi queste melodie a nuova vita. Sopra ogni cosa Mascagni amò la voce tenorile. Ascoltando Caruso e Gigli, Pertile e Taccani, mi vengono le lacrime agli

occhi. Se fossi stato presente al Costanzi a quella serata fatale del 1890 credo che mi sarebbe scoppiato il cuore.

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La trama

Il giovane Turiddu, che abita in un paese della Sicilia, si fida con Lola ma viene quindi chiamato alle armi per un anno. Al congedo apprende che la sua promessa ha frattanto sposato il carrettiere Alfio e quindi rivolge l'attenzione a Santuzza, che diventa sua amante. Stanco dell'avventura, fa ritorno a Lola, con cui intrattiene una relazione clandestina.

L'opera inizia con un preludio. Giunge da lontano il canto di Turiddu, che fa una serenata alla sua fiamma. È domenica di Pasqua e la gente del luogo si affolla sulla piazza. Santuzza chiede notizie di Turiddu a sua madre Lucia, la quale afferma che si è recato al vicino borgo di Francofonte per l'acquisto di una partita di vino. La ragazza tuttavia replica che il giovane è stato visto la notte prima nel paese.

Alfio il barrocciaio esprime con il canto il piacere della sua vita di girobago. Entra nella bottega del vino di Mamma Lucia e le chiede di servirgli una caraffa, ma la donna gli

risponde che ha esaurito le scorte ed inviato il figlio Turiddu a Francofonte per la relativa provvista. Alfio sa bene che non è vero, in quanto lui stesso l'aveva visto di prima mattina nei pressi della sua casa. Mamma Lucia desidera un chiarimento, ma Santuzza l'arresta in tempo, ed Alfio esce dalla rivendita mentre i paesani si radunano di fronte alla chiesa. Santuzza intona l'inno pasquale.

Mentre i fedeli entrano nella chiesa ella spiega a Mamma Lucia perché ha smesso di parlarle: Turiddu ha tradito il suo amore riprendendo la relazione con la vecchia fiamma Lola malgrado il matrimonio con Alfio. La donna commiserà Santuzza ed entra nella chiesa per recitare una preghiera. La ragazza rimane all'esterno ed affronta Turiddu, al quale dichiara di sapere dove ha trascorso la notte. Gli professa ancora una volta il proprio amore ed aggiunge che è disposta a perdonarlo. Turiddu nega i propri sentimenti per Lola e la rimprovera della gelosia. La discussione è interrotta dal canto di Lola, che attraversa la piazza in direzione della chiesa. Riprende la lite. Santuzza supplica il giovane di rimanere, ma egli la getta a terra e segue Lola.

Subito dopo compare Alfio, in cerca della moglie. In un momento di collera, Santuzza gli rivela il tradimento di Lola. Alfio giura di vendicarsi.

Segue un intermezzo, che descrive la benedizione pasquale.

I fedeli escono dalla chiesa. Turiddu, felice per la presenza di Lola, si ferma alla bottega della madre per una sbicchierata, a cui invita i paesani. Si avvicina Alfio, che rifiuta il bicchiere di vino offertogli da Turiddu. Le donne si allontanano in compagnia di Lola ed Alfio sfida a duello il rivale. I due giovani decidono di incontrarsi oltre gli orti.

Turiddu prega la madre di benedirlo e di avere cura di Santuzza nel caso di un suo mancato ritorno. Mentre scompare dalla scena entra la ragazza, che consola Mamma Lucia. Si ode un grido lontano: Turiddu è rimasto ucciso nel duello!

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Traduzione: Marcella Barzetti

Nato nel Galles da genitori irlandesi e gallesi **Dennis O'Neill** è fra i principali tenori di rinomanza mondiale ed uno specialista nel repertorio verdiano. E' da anni felicemente impegnato in una lunga collaborazione con la Royal Opera Covent Garden per la quale ha recentemente cantato i ruoli di Gustavo (*Un ballo in maschera*), Foresto (*Attila*), Don Carlos e Radames (*Aida*).

I suoi ingaggi nel Nord America hanno

incluso la Metropolitan Opera (*La traviata*, *Aida*, *La bohème* e *Rigoletto*), la Chicago Lyric Opera, San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera, Vancouver Opera e concerti con le orchestre sinfoniche di Philadelphia, Cleveland, Montreal, Ottawa, e per il Festival di Cincinnati. E' di frequente ospite della Bayerische Staatsoper di Monaco di Baviera. Altrove in Europa ha cantato nei teatri lirici di Vienna, Bonn, Colonia, Nizza, Zurigo, Parigi, Oslo, Brusselle e Barcellona.

La sua vasta discografia comprende albums di pezzi solistici, il Requiem di Verdi con Sir Colin Davis, *La fanciulla del West* con Slatkin, videoregistrazioni di *Der Rosenkavalier* con Solti, *Die Fledermaus* con Kiri te Kanawa, diretta da Domingo, *Macbeth* con Sinopoli e *Mefistofele* per San Francisco Opera. Per la Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation ha inciso *Tosca*, *La bohème* e un album di pezzi solistici.

Il soprano **Nelly Miricioiu** è ritenuta una delle cantanti più entusiasmanti e versatili dei nostri giorni, grazie allo straordinario repertorio di opere liriche con le eroine di Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi e Puccini. Nel 1986 esordì con *Manon Lescaut* all'Opera di Stato di Vienna, dove in seguito ha cantato nella *Bohème*, in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, nella *Traviata* e in *Maria Stuarda*. Si è pure esibita alla English

National Opera (*La traviata*), al Teatro alla Scala di Milano, all'Opéra comique e all'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille nonché alla Deutsche Oper di Berlino, all'Théâtre royal de la Monnaie di Bruxelles e nei teatri lirici di Madrid, Tolosa, Monaco di Baviera, Stoccarda, Monte Carlo e Copenhagen. Le tournée della Miricioiu hanno incluso la Metropolitan Opera di New York, come pure i teatri lirici di San Francisco, Washington e Philadelphia. Nel quadro della sua attività discografica, va ricordata la registrazione, per Opera Rara, delle opere *Orazi e Curiazi* di Mercadante, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* e *Maria di Rudenz* di Donizetti, *Ricciardo e Zoraide* di Rossini e *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* di Pacini.

Il baritono gallese **Phillip Joll** studiò al Royal Northern College of Music con Nicholas Powell e Frederick Cox e successivamente al National Opera Studio londinese. Alla Welsh National Opera (la Compagnia lirica gallese) ha sostenuto la parte di Wotan nel ciclo *Der Ring des Nibelungen* sotto la direzione di Sir Reginald Goodall (esperienza ripetutasi al Royal Opera Covent Garden), di Don Fernando (in *Fidelio*) e di Oreste (in *Elektra*), nonché il ruolo di protagonista nel *Wozzeck* di Alban Berg. Durante la stagione 1996/97 ha sostenuto la parte di Rigoletto per la

compagnia teatrale gallese, debuttando quindi nello stesso ruolo e in quello di Simon Boccanegra nella nuova produzione di Carlo Rizzi. Si è anche esibito al Royal Opera Covent Garden, come pure per la compagnia Scottish Opera ed Opera North. Tra le opere da lui registrate su disco vanno ricordate in particolare *Parsifal*, *Tristan und Isolde* e *La Passione greca* di Martinů.

Diana Montague ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College of Music. Dal suo debutto come Zerlina insieme con la Glyndebourne Touring Opera è apparsa nei teatri e nelle sale da concerto più importanti del mondo, compresi la Royal Opera Covent Garden, il Metropolitan Opera di New York, il Théâtre royal de la Monnaie a Bruxelles, l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, il Teatro Colon di Buenos Aires, oltre ai festival di Bayreuth e Salisburgo.

Tra i suoi impegni figurano *Iphigénie en Tauride* (a Buenos Aires, Madrid e con la Welsh National Opera), *Le Comte Ory* (a Losanna, Roma e Glyndebourne), *La clemenza di Tito* e *Orfeo ed Euridice* di Gluck (Glyndebourne), e *Ariadne auf Naxos* a Lisbona. Le molte registrazioni effettuate da Diana Montague comprendono: *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*,

Iphigénie en Tauride, Il crociato in Egitto (per Opera Rara), oltre una raccolta di arie d'opera (per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation).

Nata nella contea inglese di Lancashire, **Elizabeth Bainbridge** effettuò gli studi al conservatorio londinese Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Nel 1964 fece il suo debutto al Royal Opera Covent Garden con *Die Walküre* e l'anno successivo entrò a far parte della compagnia omonima. Ha sostenuto, tra l'altro, la parte di Quickly, Suzuki, Amneris, Emilia, Erda, Arvidson, Filipyevna, della Vecchia (ne *The Midsummer Marriage*), Nonna Buryja (in *Jenůfa*) e della Zietta (in *Peter Grimes*). La Bainbridge si è esibita con la Royal Opera al Teatro alla Scala nel 1976, nella Corea del sud et nel Giappone nel 1979, all'Olympic Arts Festival 1984 di Los Angeles e al Festival d'Atene 1985. Le sue registrazioni discografiche includono *Norma*, *Les Troyens*, *L'astuta piccola volpe*, *Dido and Aeneas* e *The Midsummer Marriage*.

La carriera vocale di Geoffrey Mitchell si distingue per il repertorio eccezionalmente ampio, che va dalla musica antica a quella contemporanea. Tale fatto gli ha fruttato numerosi inviti della BBC ad esibirsi nel ruolo

di direttore e, in seguito, un'attività più impegnativa in sintonia con propri cantanti nonché la conseguente formazione del **Geoffrey Mitchell Choir**. Dopo le prime registrazioni su disco il complesso ha potuto stabilire regolari rapporti di lavoro con la compagnia Opera Rara, per la quale ha registrato ben 15 opere. Attualmente gode di crescente reputazione grazie agli ulteriori incarichi ricevuti dalla BBC e dalle case discografiche internazionali.

La **London Philharmonic Orchestra**, costituita nel 1932 da Sir Thomas Beecham, ha attratto nel corso degli anni una successione incomparabile di primi direttori, tra cui Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti e Klaus Tennstedt. Attualmente si alternano periodicamente sul podio il Direttore musicale Franz Welser-Möst ed il Presidente Bernard Haitink.

Dal 1964 questo complesso è l'orchestra sinfonica stabile della Glyndebourne Festival Opera (Compagnia lirica del Festival omonimo) e dal 1992 del Royal Festival Hall. Inoltre, ha effettuato tournée in ogni parte del mondo ed è la prima orchestra britannica ad esibirsi nell'URSS e in Cina. Le sue registrazioni discografiche le hanno meritato numerosi importanti premi.

David Parry ha studiato con Sergiu Celibidache ed ha iniziato la sua carriera come assistente di Sir John Pritchard. Ha fatto il suo debutto con l'English Music Theatre ed è poi diventato direttore stabile della Städtische Bühnen Dortmund e di Opera North. Dal 1983 al 1987 è stato direttore artistico di Opera 80 e dal 1992 Direttore Musicale fondatore del festival di opera contemporanea dell'Almeida Opera.

Svolge un'intensa attività sia nel teatro lirico sia in campo sinfonico. Il suo repertorio va da Mozart e l'opera italiana del Ottocento a Janáček e Britten e la musica contemporanea. In Inghilterra ha diretto frequentemente alla English National Opera ed in concerti sinfonici con la Philharmonia Orchestra. Nel 1996 ha debuttato al Glyndebourne Festival Opera con *Così fan tutte*.

Dirige spesso in Spagna nella maggior parte dei teatri lirici e con orchestre sinfoniche. Ha diretto la prima spagnola di *Peter Grimes* a Madrid e nel 1996 il primo allestimento spagnolo della *Rake's Progress*, ha inaugurato

due nuove sale di concerti con la Nona sinfonia di Beethoven ed un nuovo teatro lirico con la *Carmen*. Altre tournées l'hanno portato in Italia, dove ha diretto *Ricciardo e Zoraide* al Festival Rossini di Pesaro, in Francia, Germania, Belgio, Olanda, e Svezia dove ha diretto con grande successo *A Midsummer Night's Dream* di Britten.

Fuori d'Europa David Parry si è esibito al festival internazionale di Hong Kong, con l'UNAM Symphony Orchestra a Città del Messico e in una serie di rappresentazioni della *Carmen* in Giappone. Nel 1996 ha diretto *Kat'a Kabanová* in un nuovo allestimento per il festival della Nuova Zelanda.

Ha inciso numerosi dischi per Opera Rara, fra l'altro quello di *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* di Donizetti, che ha vinto il Priz Cecilia in Belgio; per Chandos ha diretto l'acclamato disco della *Tosca*, tre dischi di grandi arie operistiche (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague e Dennis O'Neill), *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, *La bohème*, *L'elisir d'amore* e brani del *Rosenkavalier*.

Cavalleria rusticana

[1] Prelude

The curtain is down.

Siciliana

Turiddu

- [2]** Oh, Lola, with your skin white as the lily,
Show me your smiling mouth, red as the cherry.
Out of your window lean, so I can see you.
Oh, what a sweet hour of joy, if I could kiss you!
Blood has stained the ground all round your
doorway;
Does it mean I must die because I love you?
Were I to die and Heav'n opened above me,
I would not enter without you, nothing would
move me. Ah!

[3] Prelude (conclusion)

The curtain rises.

Scene. A square in a village in Sicily, at back on the right, a church, with practicable door; on the left, an inn and the cottage of old Lucia. Time, Easter Day. At first the stage is empty. (Bells ringing in church.) Then peasants, men, women, and children cross the stage. The church door opens and the crowd enters. This movement of people continues to the end of the Chorus, then the stage is again empty.

Chorus

- [4]** Ah! Ah!

- [5]** Spring has returned and the trees are all
blossoming,
Clear is the song of the lark in the sky.
Whisper your words of love, ah, feel my heart
beating faster,
Now hold me close, hear my reply.
(The women enter the stage.)
The breezes blow across the golden meadow.
The sweetness of your singing comes to greet us.
At sunset, as we leave the fields behind us,
We like to fancy you will come to meet us,
With smiling eyes come to meet us,
Eager with longing... how we rush to embrace
you.
(The men enter.)
Work for today is now over:
The virgin is rejoicing, her son is arisen from
death.
Whisper your words of love, ah, feel my heart
beating faster,
Now hold me close, hear my reply!

Scene and Alfio's Song

Santuzza *(enters, and goes towards Lucia's cottage)*

- [6]** Tell me, mamma Lucia...

Lucia *(coming out)*

Santuzza? What do you want?

Santuzza

Is Turiddu here?

Lucia

You're mad. You think of nothing but Turiddu.

Santuzza

I only want to ask you, and I beg your
forgiveness, where shall I find him?

Lucia

I don't know, I don't know. I don't want trouble.

Santuzza

Mamma Lucia, I beg you, I implore you, do as
our
Lord once did... forgive the sinner. Tell me, for
pity's sake, where is Turiddu?

Lucia

He went to get the wine from Francofonte.

Santuzza

No! They say he was here till after midnight.

Lucia

It can't be, it can't be. He did not come home
all evening. Come inside.

Santuzza

No, I cannot go into your house? Not into your
house!

I have become an outcast!

Lucia

You're hiding something about Turiddu?

Santuzza

If you knew how I suffer!

*(Cracking of whip and bells heard from without.
Enter the chorus.)*

Alfio

- [7]** Horses champing at the bit,
Harness fastened good and tight,
Crack of the whip and away!
Winds may chill me to the bone,
Rain may soak me through and through,
I travel every day.
Horses champing at the bit,
Harness fastened good and tight,
Jump in the wagon
Crack of the whip and away!

Chorus

What a fine profession,
Taking each commission
And riding everywhere!
Yes, riding here and there.

Alfio

Jump in the wagon.
And now my journey's over
I kiss my faithful Lola,
Why, I'm her only care.

Chorus

Ah!

Alfio

Horses champing at the bit,
Harness fastened good and tight,
It's Easter and I am here!
(The chorus of women enters.)
It's Easter and I am here,
I'm here!

Chorus

What a fine profession,
Taking each commission
And riding everywhere!
And riding here and there!

*(The Chorus leaves the stage, some enter the church,
others go various ways.)*

Scene and Prayer

Lucia

- [8] Good for you, Mister Alfio, so cheerful, always
helping us out.

Alfio *(gaily)*

Mamma Lucia, I'd love a glass of wine from
Francofonte.

Lucia

All gone. Turiddu went yesterday to get some.

Alfio

He must be back. I noticed him this morning,
not far away from my place.

Lucia *(surprised)*

Really?

Santuzza *(quickly to Lucia)*

Be quiet.

Alfio

- [9] I must be going! You'll want to go to church.

Chorus *(in the church)*

Regina caeli, laetare
Alleluja!

Quia, quem meruisti portare
Alleluja!

Resurrexit sicut dixit.

Now rejoice, for our Saviour is risen,
Even death He could scorn and defy.
Unto us He had granted salvation,
We will share in His glory on high.

Santuzza

Now rejoice, for our Saviour is risen,
Let us all share in His glory on high.

Lucia, Santuzza and Chorus

Now rejoice for our Saviour is risen,
Let us share in His glory,
In His glory on high.
Alleluja!
Now rejoice for our Saviour is risen,
Even death He could scorn and defy.
Now rejoice for our Saviour from death has arisen.
We will share in His glory on high.
Now rejoice and give praise,
To the glory of God.

Santuzza

Oh, my Lord!

*(All enter the church, with the exception of
Santuzza and Lucia.)*

Lucia

Now tell me what the trouble is, Santuzza?

Romance and Scene

Santuzza

- [10] You know your son, Turiddu, promised to marry
Lola.
He vowed that he would be faithful when he
became a soldier.
He gave his word that he'd keep faith forever.
But soon, she married Alfio; then when your son
came back here
In the heat of his passion he turned to me for
comfort.
He said he loved me, I loved him, ah! I loved him.
That wicked girl, hating to see me happy,
Never thinking of Alfio, burning with rage and
envy,
She took Turiddu, she took him from me.
So, in shame and dishonour, I am deprived of
my lover:
Lola and he are one again.
Ah! I weep, and I weep despairing!

Lucia

Miserable creatures. The world is full of sadness
this blessed Easter morning.

Santuzza

I'm damned forever.
You go to church now, implore the grace of
Heaven.

Beg forgiveness for me. I'll find Turiddu.
I'll try once more to plead with him for mercy.

Lucia

Blessed Mary in Heaven, look down in pity!

(Lucia goes into the church.)

Scene

Turiddu *(enters)*

- [11] What do you want, Santuzza?

Santuzza

I wished to see you.

Turiddu

It's Easter and Mass is beginning.

Santuzza

I know, I have to talk to you.

Turiddu

Where is my mother?

Santuzza

I have to talk to you.

Turiddu

Not here, not here!

Santuzza

Where have you been?

Turiddu

What do you mean? To Francofonte.

Santuzza

That is a lie!

Turiddu

Santuzza, take my word.

Santuzza

Oh, what a liar! Last night I saw you turn off from the road. And then as day was dawning, someone saw you near the gateway to Lola.

Turiddu

Ah, you've been spying?

Santuzza

No, no, I swear it. We heard the news from Alfio, Lola's husband, as he passed by just now.

Turiddu

A fine reward for the love that I've shown you! Do you want him to kill me?

Santuzza

Oh, never even think it.

Turiddu

Leave me alone then, leave me then. Don't think that you can soften my righteous anger with your pleading eyes.

Santuzza

So do you love her?

Turiddu

No!

Santuzza

Of course she's very pretty.

Turiddu

Stop it! I've told you!

Santuzza

Lovers, lovers... oh, how I hate you!

Turiddu

Santuzza!

Santuzza

That dirty little slut has spoiled our happy life!

Turiddu

Listen, Santuzza, stop this I tell you, your jealous ravings do not impress me.

Santuzza (*with anguish*)

Beat me, insult me, and still I will love you. But how I suffer, I cannot bear it.

Turiddu

Listen, Santuzza, stop this I tell you, your jealous ravings do not impress me. Stop this, Santuzza. Stop this I tell you.

(*breaking off hearing that Lola approaches*)

Lola's Song

Lola (*behind the scenes*)

[12] Sweet flow'rs I bring you.

There are so many things I want to tell you.

Maybe I'll even whisper that I love you.

(*always coming nearer*)

Sweet flow'rs I bring you.

There are so many things I want to tell you.

Maybe I'll even whisper that I love you. Ah!

Sweet flow'rs I bring you. Oh!

(*entering and breaking off*)

Turiddu, have you seen my Alfio?

Turiddu

I only got back here just now.

Lola

Some little problem must have delayed him.

He should be here by this time. And you? You're not going in to hear the service?

Turiddu (*confused*)

Santuzza was just saying...

Santuzza

I was saying that it's Easter, and the Lord knows all our secrets.

Lola (*pointing to the church*)

You're not coming to Mass?

Santuzza

Not I... no one should go who knows at heart that she's a sinner.

Lola

I give thanks to my Saviour. I kneel in worship.

Santuzza (*ironically, with bitterness*)

Oh, you're so clever, you are so clever, Lola!

Turiddu (*to Lola*)

Let's go now, let's go now.

Why should we stay and argue?

Lola (*to Turiddu, ironically*)

Stay with Santuzza.

Santuzza (*to Turiddu with authority*)

Yes, stay here, I've something else to tell you.

Lola

Well, it may be important, I'd better leave you.

(*Exit into Church.*)

Turiddu (*scornfully*)

Ah, how could you... how could you do it?

Santuzza

She is guilty and so are you.

Turiddu (*rushing upon her*)

Ah, by God!

Santuzza (*retaining him*)

Tear me to pieces!

Turiddu

No!

Santuzza

Turiddu, I beg you.

Turiddu

No!

Santuzza

I beg you, listen!

[13] No, no, Turiddu, don't leave me alone, I implore you.

You cannot want to turn me away? No, no,

Turiddu.

Turiddu

Why do you follow me?
Why do you spy on me?
Yes, even here outside the church?

Santuzza

Stay, I implore you, you cannot leave me? Please don't abandon me. No, no, Turiddu, don't leave me alone, I implore you.

Turiddu

You're always here like a spy, you bore me!

Santuzza

See how your Santuzza weeps and implores you. How you hurt me, how can you wound me, when I'm unhappy?

Turiddu

Full of self pity...

Santuzza

No, Turiddu, stay I implore you.

Turiddu

Weeping and whining, saying you're sorry after you've hurt me!

Santuzza

Oh! Turiddu!

Turiddu

Always wailing...

Santuzza

Do not leave me, I beg of you. No! Turiddu!

Turiddu

Go! Go!

Santuzza

Ah! No, Turiddu, I beg you, how can you drive me away?

Turiddu

Ah! full of self pity, always whining, saying you're sorry after you've hurt me, just saying you're sorry when it's all over. Go! Go! Go!

Santuzza

No! No! No! See your Santuzza weeps and implores you, how can you hurt me, hurt me when I am unhappy?

Turiddu

Go! I have told you, go!
Saying you're sorry when it's all over.

Santuzza

See your Santuzza weeps and implores you. How can you hurt me when I'm unhappy?

Turiddu

Go! Go!

Santuzza

Will you drive me away?
Ah! You cannot leave me, leave me forever!

Turiddu

Won't you go away?
Ah! Full of self pity, weeping and whining...

Santuzza

No, Turiddu, don't leave me alone,
I implore you, do not leave me alone,
I implore you, Turiddu!

Turiddu

No use saying you're sorry after you've hurt me, still saying you're sorry when it's all over!

Santuzza (*threatening*)

I warn you!

Turiddu

The very sight of you disgusts me.

(*He dashes her to the ground and rushes into the church.*)

Santuzza (*in the excess of fury*)

And you, be damned this Easter. I curse you!

(*She falls down in the greatest anguish.*)

(*Enter Alfio. He crosses towards Santuzza.*)

Santuzza (*to Alfio*)

[14] Oh! So my prayer has been answered!
Mister Alfio!

Alfio

How far on is the service?

Santuzza

It's nearly over. You're not needed. (*artfully*)
Lola's companion is Turiddu!

Alfio (*surprised*)

What are you saying?

Santuzza

Yes, while you are travelling in far-off cities, going about your business, Lola was playing false and has betrayed you!

Alfio

Ah, in the name of God, what are you saying?

Santuzza

The truth.
Turiddu betrayed me and sullied my honour,
Then your wife Lola took him away from me!

Alfio (*threateningly*)

If you are lying, I will tear your heart out.

Santuzza

Why should I tell lies and try to trick you?
Better believe what I say!
My shame will speak for me,
My shame and my sorrow:
What I am telling you is true, I swear, I swear!
Turiddu betrayed me and sullied my honour,
Then Lola stole his heart away from me!

Alfio (*after a pause*)

[15] I'd like to thank you for all that you have told me.

Santuzza

There's no forgiveness for what I have said!

Alfio (*with the greatest violence*)

No, not for those two, for them and for their lying.

I'll have revenge before this day is done!

Santuzza

You can't forgive what I have said.

There's no forgiveness for what I have said!

Alfio

I'll have revenge, before this day is done!

I'll have revenge to quench my burning anger.

For all the love I had has turned to hate.

Santuzza (*with fury*)

There's no forgiveness for what I have said!

[16] Intermezzo

Scene: Chorus and Brindisi

(*Lucia crosses the stage and enters the house.*)

Chorus

[17] The service is over this Easter,

We're going home again to greet our loved ones and say:

The grace of God has spread its joy in every heart on this glorious day.

(*Lola and Turiddu come out of the church.*)

Turiddu (*to Lola who is going*)

Well, neighbour Lola, are you going to leave us and not a single word of greeting?

Lola

I'm going home. I can't think what's happened to Alfio!

Turiddu

You needn't worry, he'll be back soon.

(*to the Chorus which is going away*)

My friends, don't go away:

(*joyfully*)

Let's have a drink together!

(*They all come to the table and take drinking cups.*)

[18] Neighbours, with a glass I meet you,

Pour the wine and come to treat you.

What are friends if they can't greet you

With a laughter full of joy?

Long live wine that flows to cheer you,

Makes life happy for all those near you!

Long live wine that flows to fire you,

May the wine inspire you all!

Chorus

Viva! Viva!

Turiddu (*he drinks*)

To all your lovers!

Lola (*to Turiddu*)

I drink to your good fortune!

Turiddu

Your health!

Chorus

Viva! Your health! I drink to you my brother!

Lola, Turiddu and Chorus

Drink up, drink up, drink up and have another!

Chorus

Neighbours, with a glass I meet you,

Pour the wine and come to treat you.

What are friends if they can't greet you

With a laughter, full of joy?

Long live wine that flows to cheer you,

Makes life happy for all those near you!

Long live wine that flows to fire you.

May the wine inspire you all!

Long live wine!

Viva, Viva! Drink up! Long live wine!

Drink up!

(*Enter Alfio.*)

Finale

Alfio

[19] All the blessings of Easter!

Chorus

Neighbour Alfio, we greet you!

Turiddu

Very welcome... in time to join the party:

(*filling a glass*) take it, let the wine cheer you!

Alfio

Thank you... I cannot take the wine you offer, it would burn like a poison!

Turiddu (*throwing away the wine*)

Do as you like!

Lola

My God! What will they do?

(*Some women of the Chorus consult between themselves, they go to Lola and tell her.*)

Chorus

Poor neighbour Lola, let's get away from here.

(*The women lead Lola out.*)

Turiddu

Have you anything more to say to me?

Alfio

I? Nothing!

Turiddu

All right then... I am here when you want me.

Alfio

You're ready?

Turiddu

I'm ready.

(*They embrace, Turiddu bites Alfio's right ear, as a challenge.*)

Alfio

Well now, Turiddu, I see you really mean it.

(*artfully*)

I'm glad that we have reached an understanding!

Turiddu

[20] Alfio, listen.

I know that I am guilty;

And I assure you, as God is my witness
I'd let you tear my heart out like a dog.
But I must not die,
(sadly)
I cannot abandon my poor Santuzza,
One who truly loved me.
(with violence)
I'll drive my knife into your heart, I swear!

Alfio *(coldly)*
Turiddu, you will kill me if God wills it.
One of us has to die and we both know it.
(Exits.)

Turiddu
Mamma, mamma, this new wine really is
powerful.
This evening... surely. I must have drunk too
many glasses. I had better be going.
But first, dear mother, comfort me and bless me,
As on that day I left to join the army,
And one thing, mamma, remember, if I should
never see you again...
Love my poor Santuzza, ah, love her like a
mother,
For I made a promise that one day we'd be
married.
Love her like a mother, my poor Santuzza,
If things go badly!

Lucia
I do not understand. What are you saying?

Turiddu *(with indifference)*
Oh nothing.
[21] The wine is making me talk nonsense.
But pray to God to save me,
Yes, pray to God to save me.
Dear mother, hold me tightly,
give me your blessing, try to forgive me.
Goodbye! If things go badly, always love my
Santuzza,
dear mother. Goodbye!

(Exits hastily.)

Lucia
Turiddu? What are you saying?
*(Lucia goes to the bottom of the stage and calls
desperately.)*
Turiddu, Turiddu, ah!

(Enter Santuzza.)

Lucia
Santuzza! *(embracing Lucia)*

Santuzza
Mother Lucia!

*(The stage is filled with people. Agitation and fear
on all faces. The people scan each other's faces and
ask questions. A woman's voice is heard in the
distance.)*

Lola
There's been a fight. Turiddu has had his throat
cut!

*(Women enter in terror, one of them cries. They
rush up. Voices in the distance are heard
approaching.)*

Santuzza and Lucia *(screaming)*
Ah!

(Santuzza falls senseless, Lucia faints.)

Chorus *(with terror)*
Ah!

Composed Mascagni/Ed. Edmund Tracey
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Russell Duncan

David Parry



Nelly Miricioiu



Dennis O'Neill



Phillip Joll

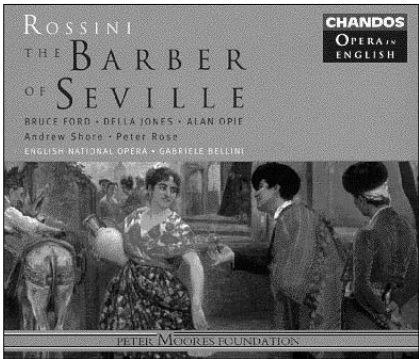


Diana Montague



Elizabeth Bainbridge

Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 7023/4



CHAN 3008(2)

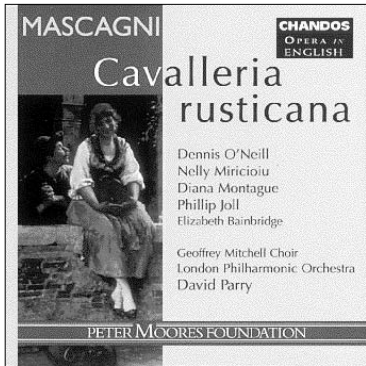


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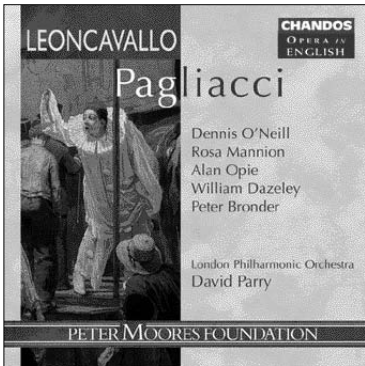


CHAN 3014(3)

Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3004



CHAN 3003



CHAN 3029

Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3017(2)

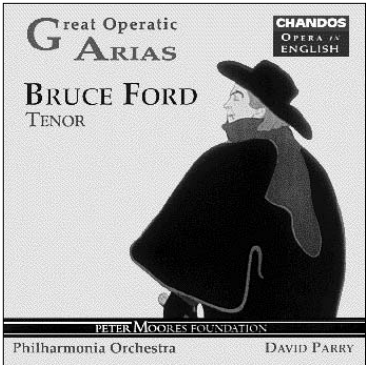


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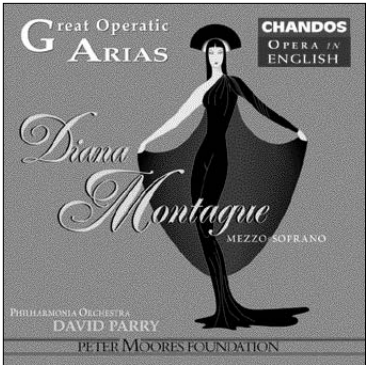


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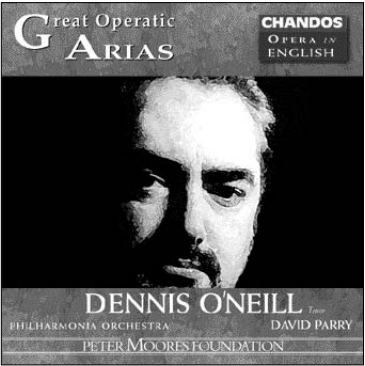
Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3006

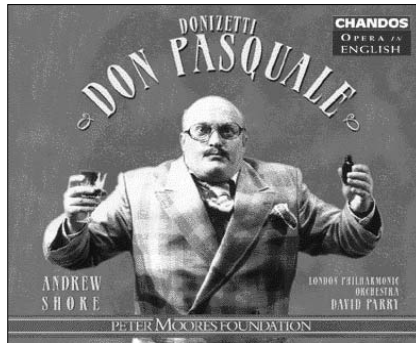


CHAN 3010



CHAN 3013

Opera in English on Chandos



CHAN 3011(2)

CHAN 3027(2)



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Rodgers Touring Organ 960 supplied by Abinger Organ Hire

Producer Brian Couzens

Sound engineer Ben Connellan

Assistant engineer Richard Smoker

Editor Jonathan Cooper

Recording venue Blackheath Halls; 3–5 August 1997

Front cover Photograph of Dennis O'Neill by Clive Barda

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MASCAGNI: CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/LEONCAVALLO: PAGLIACCI

CHANDOS

20^{bit}

CHANDOS DIGITAL 2-disc set **CHAN 3005(2)**

Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945)

Cavalleria rusticana (Country Manners)

Melodrama in one act

Libretto by G. Targioni-Tozzetti and G. Menasci

English translation by Edmund Tracey

Turiddu, a village lad.....Dennis O'Neill *tenor*
Santuzza, a village girl.....Nelly Miricioiu *soprano*
Alfio, the village carter.....Phillip Joll *baritone*
Lola, Alfio's wife.....Diana Montague *mezzo-soprano*
Lucia, Turiddu's mother.....Elizabeth Bainbridge *contralto*

TT 79:31

Ruggero Leoncavallo (1857–1919)

Pagliacci (The Touring Company)*

Opera in a prologue and two acts

Libretto by Leoncavallo

English translation by Edmund Tracey with amendments by David Parry

Tonio (in the play, *Taddeo*), a clown.....Alan Opie *baritone*
Canio (in the play, *Pagliaccio*), leader of the players.....Dennis O'Neill *tenor*
Beppe (in the play, *Harlequin*).....Peter Bronder *tenor*
Nedda (in the play, *Columbina*), Canio's wife.....Rosa Mannion *soprano*
Silvio, a villager.....William Dazeley *baritone*
Two locals.....Paul Parfitt *bass-baritone* • Peter Hall *tenor*

TT 79:45

Geoffrey Mitchell Choir
The Peter Kay Children's Choir*
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Brad Cohen assistant conductor
David Parry

(DDD)

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SOLOISTS/LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA/PARRY

CHAN 3005(2)